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Awards Announced 3-83

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#### APPLY TO THE POST OF ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

The University of the West Indies, Trinidad, is seeking a qualified candidate for the post of Assistant Librarian. The successful candidate will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the library, including the acquisition, processing, and maintenance of the collection. The candidate should have a degree in Library Science or a related field, and should have at least two years of experience in a similar position. The salary for this position is \$10,000 per annum. Applications should be sent to the University of the West Indies, Trinidad, by 15th October 1982.

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Applications accompanied by a curriculum vitae should be sent within three weeks to the Chairman of the Appointments Committee, Prof. Dr. R. W. Scheller, Kunsthistorisch Instituut, Joh. Vermeerstraat 17, 1071 DK Amsterdam, The Netherlands, quoting number 6060.

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Edited by Anne Stevenson  
 Printed by the Times Newspapers Ltd.  
 London

## At grips with the nethermost being

José Harris

NORMAN and JEANNE MACKENZIE (Editors)

*The Diary of Beatrice Webb*  
 Volume One 1873-1892, Glitter  
 Around and Darkness Within  
 386pp. Virago in association with  
 London School of Economics and  
 Political Science. £15.  
 0 86068 209 9

We keep diaries as a substitute for other relationships. We love Humanity when we fail to love or be loved by particular human beings. These two tendencies hold the clue to the character of Beatrice Webb, born Beatrice Potter in 1858. She was clever, beautiful, and rich; yet throughout her life she suffered from chronic loneliness, paranoia, spiritual isolation and unrequited sexual love. Neglected and friendless as a young girl, she confided her inner life to a private journal - a practice that became a lifelong habit and eventually consumed nearly three million words. Rebuffed in personal relationships but deeply committed to an ethic of "service to others", she became increasingly convinced of a "special mission", her "duty to society at large rather than individuals".

Hence her famous partnership with Sidney Webb - a partnership consecrated, in Beatrice's eyes if not in Sidney's, to the service of Humanity. They married in 1892, when Beatrice was thirty-four. Sidney was a Colonial Office clerk and one of the authors of *Fabian Essays in Socialism*. He was earnest, penniless, plain and obscure, and altogether an unpromising match for the suave and imperious Miss Potter. Over the next fifty years, however, their unlikely relationship exercised a unique influence on Sidney's political life. Together they wrote monumental histories of social institutions, founded the London School of Economics, and helped to stage-manage the transition from the Poor Law to the welfare state. For twenty years they schemed to permeate Liberalism and Conservatism with the Zeitgeist of collectivism. And when this failed they helped to steer the youthful Labour Party out of the shoals of anarcho-socialism into the calmer waters of bureaucratic socialism. Through their austere salon at 48 Grosvenor Road, passed politicians and philosophers, writers and civil servants, trade unionists and revolutionaries, socialists anyone who could be used to promote a "genuinely state-conscious collective mind and the machinery to carry this into effect".

Behind their work lay an unflinching search for a new secular metaphysics that would endow the service of Humanity with transcendent meaning. This they thought they had found in 1932 in Stalin's Russia, where they recorded that "the ancient axiom of Love your neighbour" had been updated into "a code of social hygiene", whereby every citizen was being "compulsorily reformed in body and mind". Contemporaries not surprisingly reacted to the Webbs with unease - seeing them simultaneously as dangerous levellers and dangerous elitists. But their presence and their purpose in life could not be ignored. For better or worse their marriage was a microcosm of many aspects of twentieth-century English history.

Many details of Beatrice's life have long been known from her two volumes *Apprenticeship* and *Our Partnership*, which cited extensive passages from her private diaries. There she described not merely her share in political movements but her private spiritual pilgrimage - her growing awareness of a "class-consciousness of the spirit", her inner conflict between "an ego that affirms and an ego that denies" and her recurring obsession with the question "do we need religion as well as science, emotional faith as well as intellectual curiosity?" *My Apprenticeship* in particular is a unique work that powerfully invokes the inner life of a woman who was not only a nineteenth-century intellectual, but who believed that God was dead but who bitterly mourned His passing. Nevertheless, historians have long been aware that the two biographical volumes drew upon merely an iceberg tip of the manuscript diaries deposited in the British Library of Political Science. Many recent studies have questioned the accuracy of Beatrice's account of the Webbs' role in public events; and the publication in 1978 of the Sidney and Beatrice correspondence made it clear that the autobiography had glossed over or distorted many important incidents. The projected publication of four volumes of extracts will now make substantial parts of the diary available to a wider readership, and should make it possible to set Beatrice's own public account of herself in a wider critical perspective.

The present volume, which covers the same years as *My Apprenticeship*, will supplement but not supersede Beatrice's own presentation of her "choice of a craft" and "search for a creed". In fact, it adds surprisingly little to our knowledge of her intellectual development. It confirms Beatrice's portrayal of herself as a profoundly religious personality, unable to accept either the uniqueness or the redemptive claims of Christianity, but constantly "grasping after some spectral idea" and deeply attached to sacramental religion and to "the consciousness of a great father". The extracts recording her reactions to organized religion are briefer than in *My Apprenticeship*. We hear nothing of the "nauseous nigger mousting" in her Victoria Park, and the account of her interest in Roman Catholicism (a life-long pole of attraction) has been much abbreviated.

Where the new volume does add greatly to *My Apprenticeship* is in the details of Beatrice's emotional life, family background and relationships with men and women. In particular, the dark underside of her husband's personality and her profound and chronic unhappiness - often resulting in crippling physical illness - are fully brought out for the first time. Throughout her childhood and youth, with a brief remission in her early teens, she was tortured by a "nethermost being of despairing self-consciousness", a "morbid horror of a certain physical deformity overtaking me". The nethermost being stands there, she wrote in December 1886, "despondent, grasping, waiting only for physical depression to clutch and strangle the ego. Such a being leads directly to suicide, for life with it is unbearable".

Where did Beatrice's dark angel come from? How can her profound, prolonged, almost physical sense of unhappiness be explained? Norman and Jeanne Mackenzie suggest in their editorial commentary that "her struggle to find herself was in some measure a woman's struggle in a man's world". That Beatrice faced great difficulties in coping with male patronage and prejudice is, on the evidence of these pages, impossible to deny. Yet her problems were both narrower and broader than a feminist interpretation would suggest. On the one hand the dark forces that oppressed her were so pathological, so bizarre and so unusual as to be scarcely capable of a generalized social explanation; they were the mystical trials of a soul in torment, by their nature peculiar only to herself. And on the other hand her experiences were human rather than female; they were those of a morbidly sensitive, hyper-intelligent person of either sex painfully migrating from a world of hierarchy and order onto the mud-flats of modernity. Readers of Max Weber will note with interest that his nervous illness took almost exactly the same form as Beatrice Webb's, and that he described the dark beast that threatened him in almost identical terms.

In so far as Beatrice's torments have a social explanation, it seems to have lain deep in the circumstances of her early life. To outward appearances her childhood was enviably privileged. Her father, Richard Potter, was a wealthy railway promoter, who combined entrepreneurial dynamism with considerable social and mental cultivation. He mixed easily in aristocratic society and filled his house

with men of learning - among them Herbert Spencer, Francis Galton and Thomas Huxley. Devoted to his nine daughters, he treated them from an early age as his intellectual equals, encouraged them in "advanced" reading and took them with him on extensive foreign travels. "He was the only man I ever knew", Beatrice recorded, "who genuinely believed that women were superior to men and



Beatrice with her parents in 1865, a photograph reproduced from the book reviewed here.

acted as if he did". Beatrice's mother, Lawrencea Heyworth, was her "only complained, was her 'only young, too uneducated and worst of all, too frivolous to be a companion for her". The result, Beatrice recorded, was a childhood spent hiding "in secret places", yearning for crumbs of affection. "Its loneliness was absolute", she wrote in December 1886, "nor oppressed: I was merely ignored".

Reared by such a Medusa it was not perhaps surprising that Beatrice from early childhood took refuge in fantasy-relationships. "I would sit and imagine love-scenes and death-bed scenes and confure up the intimacy and tenderness lacking in my life". One of the earliest diary entries shows her reproaching herself for "making a lot of silly castles in the air" about her father's friend, Francis Galton. Such fantasies are scarcely abnormal in girls of sixteen; but in Beatrice's case they lasted well into adult life and were often more real to her than actual human relationships. Throughout her girlhood and young womanhood she had no close friends of either sex except household servants. Among her eight sisters she had a close relationship only with Maggie, and that came to an end when Maggie married. "I was not made to be loved", she wrote, "there must be something repulsive in my character". In the ensuing emotional vacuum rose her fantasy that embroiled her in the great tragedy of her youth, her passion for Joseph Chamberlain.

Beatrice "came out" in 1876 but, by her early twenties, she was disenchanted with the pleasures of the London season. She became increasingly frustrated by idleness and made frantic efforts to repair her education - studying mathematics, biology, economics and English

literature. Under the influence of her sister Kate and her cousin Charles Booth she became increasingly interested in social work and ambitious to master "what has been theoretically thought out in social questions". The death of her mother in 1882 "revolutionized her life", and transformed her from an "anaemic girl" weighed down by nervous exhaustion, into an "exceptionally energetic woman" capable of leading several lives at once. Before the new Beatrice could blossom, however, Joseph Chamberlain came upon the scene and thrust her back into six further years of neurosis and self-torture.

Joseph Chamberlain in 1883 was a twice-married widower of forty-seven. He was the great star of Birmingham radicalism, the demagogue of gas-and-water socialism, and on the brink of his bid to wrest control of the Liberal Party out of the hands of the ageing Gladstone. In appearance he was cold, hard, saturnine and flashy, his slightly "caddish" style dramatically enhanced by a monocle and an orchid. He was totally dedicated to power politics in a way that was rare among English statesmen of the nineteenth century. The Chamberlains and the Potters rented neighbouring London houses in the summer of 1883 and Beatrice, who had watched several seasons of suitors come and go with indifference, was instantly intrigued. "Mr. Chamberlain joined us in the evening and I had much conversation with him. How I should like to study that man... I do and I don't like him", run diary entries for June-July 1883. By September she was pondering deeply on his political philosophy: were his democratic convictions rooted in "honest experience and thought" or were they "originally the tool of ambition, now become inextricably woven with the love of power"? A few weeks later she was warned that "the Right Honourable gentleman takes a very conventional view of women". But then it was too late. Beatrice's male imagination had gone racing ahead of her. She was already in her mind's eye the great man's wife and helpmate, his intellectual and emotional partner in grand schemes of social reform. Her main qualm was whether there might not be a vein of unscrupulousness in Chamberlain that she would find hard to stomach. "One thing I will not do. I will not give way to a feeling, however strong, which is not sanctioned by my better self".

Beatrice's relationship with Chamberlain over the next four years, was a long tale of heart-break, disillusionment and personal humiliation. In a series of highly-charged private conversations she soon discovered that he had boundless contempt for the mental capacities of all women, including herself. He exacted from the ladies of his household total submission, and his interest in Beatrice lay "not in any desire to please me, but in an intense desire that I should think and feel like him". At first Beatrice persuaded herself that she could not conceivably submit to such a tyrant; but unfortunately, she was by this time locked in the coils of a physical passion that made any such resistance impossible. Indeed it is difficult to avoid the impression that it was precisely in Chamberlain's harsh male self-assertiveness that his attraction for Beatrice lay - in his "gloom and seriousness", his "absence of any gallantry", his "passionate desire to crush opposition to his will". For many months she was torn between panic-stricken assertion of her own "intellectual individuality" and sexual desire.

Worse traumas lay in store for her, however, as it became increasingly doubtful whether she was to have a "chance" one way or the other. Chamberlain, having on many occasions sought her out, began to behave with marked rudeness and indifference. When in November 1885 she confessed her feelings to Chamberlain's sister, who had always seemed to favour the match, she was told that she "had been mistaken" and that the brother had never thought of her. "That evening... when I was sobbing so bitterly, I heard Clara







# Thinning out the fat of the land

Valentine Cunningham

LAWRENCE DURRELL  
Constance or Solitary Practices  
393pp. Faber. £7.95.  
0 571 117570

The rococo splendours of Lawrence Durrell's prose percolate irresistibly, like the health-imparting flavours of his beloved *Midi d'été*, through almost any subject. His taste is for the lushly excessive and the exuberantly soupy. So is that of Aubrey Blanford, the novelist who is, in some senses, writing out the current Durrell "quincunx" of novels. "He closed his eyes the better to hear the tumultuous clatter of stars, or dining later at the Bavaria with her face occupying the centre of his mind, he engulfed the victorious jubes of mandatory oysters. Out! What prose! Nabokov à la mode!" That's Blanford early on in *Livia*, second member of the quincunx, and one of the most richly plummy of puddings that the old chef-récommencer has ever concocted. Early on, though, in *Constance*, third and latest in the series, and possibly the central text, Blanford is messily shut up in a gunnery practice accident in Egypt, and although he is brought back from death for a paralysed existence in a wheelchair, he is not the exuberantly fantasizing and the uncouth tenderness of his mother's old Bible-punching manservant Cade. What makes *Constance* distinctive is that it bears the grim burden of the Nazi ascendancy, the Second World War generally and the occupation of France in particular, in an extraordinarily compelling (and in some ways blinding) out of *Livia*'s splendours and warmth. Anger and anxiety about what happened to and in Provence in the war sustains this novel's intricacies.

Just as at the end of *Livia* it had seemed that Prince Hassad's gaudy night at the floodlit Pont du Gard — where a lusty throng of Avignon toughs were sated with the best available food, drink and Marseilles hookers — might somehow keep the way for ever distant thing, so the beginning of *Constance* has hostilities break out almost cosily to the noise of a farmer's ancient cloud cannon, fired to make rain fall benignly on the olive trees and the vines. But festive repelition and agricultural bounty are soon shown to be things of the past. People, land and novel are quickly condemned to sobriety and short-comings. "Pas de pain" the Avignon bakers have to announce, for the people's consumption. Wine, awarded, ekeed out, has to be scrounged for in remote angles of cellars. The Germans stop the fêtes and the bullfights. The travelling Honey Man with his amazing van load of beehives, emblem of the *Midi*'s natural goodness, is robbed of his old markets and forced to sneak discretely about the back roads. The Germans have shipped all the firewood elsewhere. The cast of *Livia* is scattered to war efforts in England or Egypt or Switzerland. When Hassad and Constance come straggling back to run the Red Cross agency in Avignon, they find everything they'd enjoyed in the previous Provencal summer cast down. Ichabod is writ large over the houses of Lords Bano and Olen and over Durrell's prose.

A devastating violence has taken over. Even in Egypt, where Blanford took his luscious Nabokovian horrors overtake the fat and the stylistic fatness of the land. A bend of the Nile "decapitates" the bronze warmth of a village; the wan richness of paradise turns out to be peopled by so many dead old "King Lear". The war's cruel hurtfulness can nowhere be shunned. Blanford's new girlfriend poisons herself with cyanide in grief over her husband's death. Sam, Constance's new husband, engages in a bloody, taken apart by his own side's mortar shells in the same accident that injures Blanford. *Livia*, Constance's Nazi-fancying sister who has inexplicably lost an eye, hangs herself in Constance's Avignon house ("The lost eye looked like the belly button of some medieval saint"). General Von Esslin, governor of Avignon, also loses an eye, two eyes in fact, in a hunting accident arranged by his Polish servant. The Honey Man is

machine-gunned by the Resistance. Nancy, impoverished wife and mother who offers her Gestapo lover obscene favours for the lives of Jews, is vengefully murdered by Avignon citizens once the Germans depart. In short, looniness of all sorts, contrived and contingent, takes over. The flashy set-pieces and baroque stagings that Durrell likes so much to mount manage to disturb, rather than entice, in their vivid madness. In one, a couple of tanks smash to pieces a pile of bicycles laid out before Avignon's *Monument des Morts* to prevent their owners taking messages to the Resistance, the Germans say. In another, the novel's splurge of a finale, a mixed gang of inmates from a bombed-out asylum rides into Avignon on a cart in time to witness the awful shaving and shaving of the Germans' convalescing — a singing, hanging festival crew, a Ship of Fools, a crazy mockery of a Knight Templar procession led by Lord Galen's old hired quacker for Templar secrets and treasure, the tortured and deranged Quarrefages.

Nothing, perhaps, could signal *Constance*'s shift of tone more sharply than this zany parody of the earlier novel's beloved Templars. The mysterious Templars, mixed up with the rich promises of gnosticism, had been offered as the source of great wisdom and wisdom, and Constance intimately involved in this quincunx's own order and structure. Now we are made to wonder whether the enticing magical knowledge of *Monstrieux* and its desert secretaries are going the way of Durrell's despised Catholic Nazis and vengefully puritan Protestants. Hitler's interest in the Templars looks pretty damning (he's even losing the war because of false prophecies coming from the severed head of an ancient Templar).

The more modern wisdoms that the quincunx has so far zestfully traded in

are also left wanting by this novel. Durrell's favoured Freudian apparatuses are, of course, still in play: Constance's whale of a vagina, engulfing, annihilating Sam; Blanford's obsessing mother; the excremental excitement of what *Livia* announced to be our anal-oral era, with its keen allied interest in suppositories and what its characters' powerful sphincters can get up to. But the psychoanalysis that Constance practises is failing to cure the woman Pia and the autistic son of Affad. Constance sprawls forlornly on Freud's clapped out old sofa, tiredly skimming the master's pamphlets. And the Jews, present in this novel not just as Nazi victims but as inventors of psychoanalysis, masters of the excremental gold obsession that's presented as warring with the Nazi blood cult, are charged with a "cosmic solipsism" and are said to be implicated in the terrors of the atom bomb. As for Affad's windy doctrines about the declining strength of sperm in the modern world and the curious need to "document" it or give it more air: it looks as if Constance's new lover will prove at least some deterrent to her Freudianized views.

And what of the state of fiction under such pressures? Does the implication of the previous novels that reading through their extended mysteriousness and puzzle to be seen as a version of the quest for gnostic wisdoms, the practice of cabalistic searches through and re-readings of texts, totter with the Templars? Does Durrell *le grand suppositoire* in his associated role as the big supposer, dazzling inventor, supreme fictioneer, have to share the doubts building up around Freud's famous sofa? To some extent they do. The earlier game between the novelist Sutcliffe who writes our novels while at the same time being written into the novel (also ours) of his rival Blanford, manages to

survive the war's gloom, even after Blanford tears up his Sutcliffe novel. Durrell's busy, comic questioning of fictional characters' existence goes on. *Constance* still stands in the great line of Flann O'Brien, which is where its predecessors sited the earlier novels. But only just. Sutcliffe and Co have become oddly normal, realistic characters. Noticeably Durrell's flamboyant play with the unreal (ie merely fictional), not least his amplitude of coincidences, conjunctions, parallels, duplications, repetitions, has been quietened by the war like everything else.

Orgasm, we are told, is a fiction of joining, and so also were *Monstrieux* and *Livia*, novels packed with emblematic connections and connectors, with rivers and railway lines and bridges — the Pont du Gard, the Pont Romain of Sommières, the Pont d'Avignon itself, and all the rest. In *Constance* Sutcliffe imagines his novel, not unlike the quincunx, as a "titanic do-it-yourself kit, le roman appareil . . . a book full of spare parts of other books, of characters left over from other lives, all circulating in each other's bloodstreams . . . A big switchy book, all points and sidings." But also in *Constance*, the bloodstream of the Nile is violated, the Germans stand astride the rivers of southern France, and corpses hang from viaducts over the railway lines. Still, the very last act of the novel — to destroy Avignon by blowing up an explosives-packed train parked on the railway bridge over the Rhône — is frustrated. And one lunatic who stays aloof from the Templar-mocking riot does so because, a model railway fancier who sleeps with an engine under his pillow, he stays comatose asleep. The orgasmic, switchy, gnostic-respecting novel may yet, it is implied, rise again and share in Avignon's resurrection.

## Mutability the key

Linda Taylor

ROSALIND BRACKENBURY  
The Woman in the Tower  
185pp. Harvester. £7.50.  
0 7108 0432 6

"In fairy tales, the woman in the tower paces and paces, enclosed in walls. The mythical ensnared woman can only be released by a man, by suffering or by death. Like the Lady of Shalott, she is condemned to a life of shadowy images; like Rapunzel, she has no staircase by which to escape her fate. That fate is to exist within a tightening circle; she is to exist and immobile, her actions are repetitive. While the tale holds, she has no life. This frozen state can also be described by words such as frigidity or dependence. Sociologically speaking, it might be held that the circumstances have decreed the psychologically that the subject is much responsible for it as any outside agent. For fiction, though, the state is rich in implication and innuendo.

In her latest novel, Rosalind Brackenbury explores the trap of the tower. The story of one woman, told by another woman, fifty years younger. The story of the young woman, the narrator, is told by her, incidentally. The form is that of a back and reflection. The meaning is the big one: Life.

To enhance the myth, the two women are nameless. This allows them a kind of free-floating range; they cannot be itemized or placed, indeed, when the novel opens, all the words (almost all) have already been spoken between them: the older woman, aged eighty-two, has been rendered speechless by a stroke. She had then before and they are always catholic. Immobilization is followed by liberation, as when her married husband died of a heart attack. "She was bound through with the impact of it, of his death. Numb, struck down, but a side like dead wood, immovable, but his death, for her, was also a release. He it was who had put her in the tower."

Outside the tower, the older woman (or "She") learns the lessons of her London mentor, Hyde: that discretion be spirals, that chaos should and does lived with, that language and ideas are equally important, that life is to be savoured ("Now is all we have") that freedom is solitary and isolated, that mutability is the key, that "human activity is given sea, contained by the infinity." The final circle, then, is the eternal one: life consists in coming towards the precipice and the appalling drop into the unknown. "By the time 'She' meets the narrator in the young woman who rents a room in her house in Cambridge, she knows all this. Her husband, she knows all this. Her relationship is that of teacher and pupil; together they compile the story of this book. Through tape recordings of their conversations, through letters, "his and yours. His and hers (all wife's) — the narrator puts it all together: 'you offered me a pathway into your own life and we left it out of the impasses of my own'."

The narrator is complex, the puzzle for the reader lies in unravelling tenuous truths that the narrator grapples with. The book, like the myth, is incomplete; there are stories still to be told. The novel ends with a collection of letters sent between the young woman's lover and his wife, and another story, a more complete and painful, and for the book, a highly strained and unnecessary conclusion. One speechless, immobile old woman in a garden ward holds in her key to life's mystery, and we're forced to find this seemingly absurd assumption credible.

*Der Mauerbringer*, by Peter Schönbauer, which was reviewed in the TLS July 30, will be published in the US States by Pantheon Books. The English translation by Ralph Manheim

AUSTRALIA

## Irrupting into the inland

Randolph Stow

JUDITH WRIGHT  
The Cry for the Dead  
303pp. Oxford University Press. £16.  
0 19 54296 7

KEITH D. SUTER and KAYE STEARMAN  
Aboriginal Australians  
20pp. Minority Rights Group, 36 Craven Street, London WC2N 5NG.  
£1.20  
ISSN: 0305 6252

In her introduction to *The Generations of Men*, 1959, in its way a trial draft of *The Cry for the Dead*, Judith Wright described her subject as "the great and almost unchronicled pastoral migrations" in which her forebears had taken part. In the earlier book her material was semi-fictionalized for younger readers. She has now returned to the subject, drawing on wider sources, and has produced a scholarly example of what she calls "pastoral history", in which the story of the Wyndhams and Wrights is framed and interpreted by the story of the Aborigines and their environment, the natural surroundings of the white intruders.

The book opens with an evocative chapter on the Wadja people of central Queensland, who also close the history. It then backtracks to the arrival in New South Wales of George Wyndham (the author's great-great-grandfather), and his acquisition of land in the Hunter Valley in 1828. This change of scene draws attention to a slight defect of the book, its assumption that readers will have an extensive knowledge of the topography of northern New South Wales and central Queensland. The maps are well enough, but too few. Urban Australians, and all too few Australians, will also think it a failing that very little is explained about the systems of land-tenure in the Australian colonies.

Wyndham, a gently-bred Wiltshire man of moderate means, passed most of his life surrounded by sound stone buildings, gardens, orchards and a famous vineyard. He did, however, take part in the expansion inland, where he leased vast tracts of land of which he could make little use for lack of labour. Ex-convict shepherds feared the inland Aborigines, and the British government set its face against the settlers' demand that "coolie" labour should be sent to them from India.

In his exploratory wanderings, and in his social life, Wyndham was obliged to notice the atrocities committed by (and, more often, against) the Aborigines. Large numbers of them were shot or driven over cliffs by white policemen or by white civilians and their servants. Great was the indignation when under the comparatively civilized Governor Gipps, seven white men were hanged for their murders. Such exemplary justice, prompted by the notion that Aborigines had the rights of British subjects, was never known again. In the years that followed, the Border Police, and the more notorious Native Police, wreaked havoc of which few precise details are recorded. One very active officer of the Native Police, well known to Miss Wright's grandfather, is described by her as "sinister and puerile."

If George Wyndham's circumstances were comfortable by colonial standards, those of his granddaughter, the author's mother, were more typical of the country. The son of a very poor settler, Wright at first married the properties of other men, and at last came to have a station of his own in central Queensland, among the Wadja. With them his relations seem to have been generally good, and he employed them as stockmen, horse-breakers, and even shepherds, much to the disgust of them despised that work. This symbolism was disapproved of by most of his neighbours, whose master plan in the key to life's mystery, and we're forced to find this seemingly absurd assumption credible.

G. A. Wilkes has borrowed beneath the skin of the myth and uncovered evidence of a class-structure and of squalid working conditions in the bush which have been ignored by commentators and, consequently, suppressed in collections of the works of the myth-makers. Lawson himself denounced the sentimental ideal of

Queensland seems to have been fairly comfortable, full of that making do which is probably responsible for the makeshift impression produced by Australia generally: what Robin Boyd has called "the Australian ugliness" and Patrick White the "bags and iron" of Australian life. There were many serious illnesses, some mysterious, of men and stock. And, as earlier in the more settled southern districts, the balance of nature showed itself to be disturbed by the white man. The traditional burning of the grass by nomadic Aborigines had both improved the pasture and kept back the formidable scrub. Without them, the scrub ran wild, and grassland deteriorated, further damaged by the hardening of the soil under the trampling of the white man's heavy animals, which also caused erosion by breaking down the banks of water courses. A plague of dingoes, probably due to the destruction of tribal life, would be followed, when they had been poisoned off, by a plague of marsupials, competing with the sheep for feed. Imported weeds invaded; last, and most dramatically, the prickly pear, whose Triffid-like march across Queensland is still remembered with awe.

These problems, and a sequence of droughts and floods, meant that at the time of Albert Wright's sudden death he was almost ruined. From her retreat in a more congenial climate his resourceful widow made terms with bankers and managers for a number of years; but the troublesome

Queensland station had to be sold in 1917. Soon afterwards those who remained of the Wadja, if any true members of that group did remain, were removed to a reserve, and have since disappeared. The intention was humane: to protect them from the temptations offered by "grocery shops", and by the poor Chinese who sold them opium — or, even more deleterious, opium-ash. But the result must have been thought satisfactory by a local member of the Queensland legislature. In 1901 this Socialist declared: "The law of evolution says the nigger shall disappear in the onward progress of white Australia."

Miss Wright's thoughtful book has left Australians in her debt, not for the first time. Her researches into the fragmented record have given us what comes as near to being a history of the vanished Wadja and their neighbours as we are ever likely to see. Her account of the ecological changes caused by the white man's sudden irruption into the inland is also, probably, the first of its kind. The eye of a poet-conservationist has noticed much that is novel. To how many people would it have occurred, for instance, that the Aborigines may have resented finding their lands suddenly strewn with steaming great platters of cow-dung? But it probably was so.

The Minority Rights Group's revised 1982 report, *Aboriginal Australians*, is a dispiriting document. There are now between 200,000 and

300,000 Australians who identify themselves as Aborigines — the higher figure, though including many people of mixed race, matching estimates of the population of the continent when colonization began — and there has been a marked rise in "black consciousness", and in contacts between the scattered groups. In the past fifteen years a number of rights have been won, and the Federal government and the majority of white electors are now far more liberal in their attitudes than used to be the case.

However, standards of health, housing and education remain abysmal; police persecution goes on unabated; alcohol is a worse problem than ever; and white hostility continues to be rife in those areas where it most matters. The central government's various agencies, though better than nothing, do not seem to be very effective against the sharp practice of some State governments (crudest and most malignant of them the government of Queensland), which remain unreconciled to land rights, or even voting rights. Even such a success story as the grant of an area the size of Portugal to the Pitjantjatjara in South Australia must be applauded with caution.

The report is sober and restrained, and ever so faintly optimistic. But one closes it with feelings of despondency. There is too much in it which brings to mind the native peoples of North America, and even the gypsies of England.

## Bush is beautiful

Robert Brain

G. A. WILKES  
The Stockyard and the Croquet Lawn: Literary Evidence for Australia's Cultural Development  
153pp. Edward Arnold. £9.95.  
0 7131 8042 0

In the early days of Australian settlement, the myth-makers looked at the ingredients at their disposal with dismay. In place of Captain Cook's vision of flower-studded meadows and noble savages they found a bleaker reality. To an English observer it looked as if God had tried his hand in Australia, made all the mistakes and then gone home, leaving behind a debris of kangaroos and kookaburras, trees which lost their bark in summer instead of their leaves in spring, cherries with stones on the outside, Aborigines who seemed barely human.

Confronted with what seemed an insuperable problem — to achieve a reconciliation of European civilization and Australian facts — the scribblers decided to make the best of God's bad job. They learned to rejoice in the brown land, the gum-tree and cockatoo, the new generation of Currency Lads and Lassies which sprang from such unpromising convict stock. The Outback and its labourers became the raw material for the Australian legend and by the 1890s the values of shepherd and cattle-drover became the values of all Australians — four-fifths of whom today live in cities. Search any motor-car salesman in Moonee Ponds and out will jump a filthy-mouthed teamster or a flea-ridden swagman in a cabbage-tree hat. A nation's idea of itself has been moulded by the mystique of the nomadic bushworker created by such literary patriots as Joseph Furphy, Henry Lawson and "Banjo" Paterson. Australians, then, are descendants of a noble race of bushmen who have produced the most democratic society in the world, a utopia for the working man, where mateship and its ideals "exalt the humble and meek and pull down the mighty from their seat."

G. A. Wilkes has borrowed beneath the skin of the myth and uncovered evidence of a class-structure and of squalid working conditions in the bush which have been ignored by commentators and, consequently, suppressed in collections of the works of the myth-makers. Lawson himself denounced the sentimental ideal of

mateship and wrote that "a shearing shed is not what city people picture it to be . . . it is perhaps the most degrading hell on the face of the earth." Furphy's *Such is Life* provides as for bushworkers for a caste system as for a bushworkers' democracy: non-human Blacks, semi-human Chinese, stinking Swanhoppers (pest exterminators), rouseabouts who did menial jobs, drovers who worked on horseback, and "despised the 'crawlers' and 'tailers' who followed the sheep. On a cattle station only gentlemen were entertained in the House: foremen and dealers slept in the manager's Cottage; jackaroos and stockmen dosed down Barnacks, while unknown quantities were sent off to 'the left-hand corner of the rain-paddock'."

From the beginning the Australian legend drew its prime inspiration from the bush (the Stockyard), rejecting everything urban and English (the Croquet Lawn). The Outback is the authentic virgin; the city the second-hand trade from Europe. Furphy even has the sun join in the fight against European invasion: "the glitter had died off the plain as the sun went on its way to make a futile attempt at purifying the microbe-laden atmosphere of Europe". Here starts the long martyrdom of the Pom, those "slender-witted, virgin-souled, overgrown schoolboys". Trollope noted in 1872 this "idea that Englishmen: that new chums — or Englishmen just come from home — are made of paste, whereas the Australian, native or thoroughly assimilated, is 'steel' all through, I found to be universal". So strong is the appeal of an Australian identity untroubled by Europe that it goes on today despite the fact that the antithesis has outgrown its original terms. Every T-shirt season there is renewed frenzy to beat the English, a T-shirt invites everyone to "Keep Australia Beautiful! Shoot a Pom". A notice outside a Lion Safari park declares: "Cars \$2, Senior Citizens \$1. Poms on Bikes Free."

As in all myths there is a dilemma. Australian nationalism has been judged according to the extent to which it departs from English values and loyalties; at the same time colonial culture has been measured against European standards. Professor Wilkes asks, how the story would read if we chose not to admit the assumption that lies through an out-and-out resistance to cosmopolitanism; and the "croquet lawn" and he has to trouble showing that Australians have always enjoyed a certain amount of "gracious living". Unfortunately, even though many

Australians speak French prettily and go to Bayreuth rather than the Munich Bierfest, no one is likely to recognize them as genuine Aussies. Flannery *Such is Life* provides as for bushworkers for a caste system as for a bushworkers' democracy: non-human Blacks, semi-human Chinese, stinking Swanhoppers (pest exterminators), rouseabouts who did menial jobs, drovers who worked on horseback, and "despised the 'crawlers' and 'tailers' who followed the sheep. On a cattle station only gentlemen were entertained in the House: foremen and dealers slept in the manager's Cottage; jackaroos and stockmen dosed down Barnacks, while unknown quantities were sent off to 'the left-hand corner of the rain-paddock'."

Now we come to the notorious cultural cringe, a term invented before Germaine Greer was out of the pinstripes. This cringe reflects a dual concern for the national image, both on the part of those who apologize for it and those who deplore its deferential attitude. On the whole Australians still continue to "black up" when they talk to an overseas visitor: they do an Edna Everidge imitation in strong Strine, tell the story about Betts Davis (or was it George Withers?) going all the way to Melbourne (or was it Wellington, NZ?), and finding it closed, and agree that the finest novel about Australia, *Kangaroo*, was written by a mere tourist. The point of the act is to draw attention to the deficiencies of the country and the culture before their interlocutors have a chance to recognize them and express their themselves.

With wit and wide-ranging scholarship which explores not only literature but also newspapers, etymologies, jokes, folklore and everyday phrases, Wilkes takes a sharp look at long-accepted patterns, knocking down some of the stereotypes in a harmonious, jargon-free discourse which is part of a wider, more or less politically inspired attempt to give the Australian image a face-lift. It is, in some ways, the stereotypical "white" he perpetuates others, for example the "stupid, saw-like, indescribable white" of the women's voices, caused by their mates' naive sexuality. He shows that there is a gross disparity between the myth and the literature, that there is no one single tradition, no one set of opposed traditions. Unfortunately, while it is good to have facts, facts do not a myth make; myths depends for their effect on a selection of the evidence. No amount of honest history will ever make Richard II into a good king while Shakespeare is still read; and no amount of honest literary criticism will convince the Australian to draw his inspiration from Georgian pantheon and croquet lawn, rather than the shearing shed and the stockyard.

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# The case for empathy

Brigid Brophy

STEPHEN R. L. CLARK

The Nature of the Beast: Are animals moral?  
127pp. Oxford University Press.  
£7.95.  
0 19 219130 6

I reached the conclusion that animals are persons at the same age (two or three) and by the same route (entering relationships with those that came my way) as I reached the conclusion that humans are. I remember making an intense effort to convince myself that "lamb" was one of the many English words I was at the time discovering to have two quite different meanings. Only thus could I acquit my parents of the atrocious and, incidentally, the hypocrisy that was implied if the amusingly stilted legs of the creatures they bade me, on our trips to the country, befriended in the fields were identical in substance with the leg of lamb they bade me eat up at Sunday luncheon. From the moment my attempt failed it was intellectually inevitable that I should become a vegetarian.

This second experience of mine comes within the compass of Stephen Clark's last book, the first within that of his new one. In *The Moral Status of Animals*, published in 1977, Dr Clark, who is a lecturer at Glasgow University, cast the eye of a moral philosopher of Aristotelian inclination and expertise over the morality – or, rather, as he conclusively shows it to be, the immorality – of the whole range of exploitative treatment that humans inflict on their fellow animals of other species. Against that literature and imaginative book, which constitutes a coherent philosophy of the animal liberation movement, I made at the time only one tiny complaint. The "status" in its title seemed poised ambiguously between an active and a passive sense: did it imply that the status of animals is such as to compel us humans to behave morally towards them, or did it imply that they themselves had the status of moral things? The book in fact deals with our moral obligations towards them, but I suspect now that Clark's thoughts were already considering the two questions as interdependent. It is the second question that his new book tackles, its sub-title asking explicitly "Are animals moral?"

Most children, by the way, would probably answer that question "Yes" – if, that is, to suppose someone capable of behaving immorally implies that you think him capable of morality. A study by Alan D. Bowd of Riverina College, Australia, published this year (probably after Clark's book went to press), finds that 91 per cent of the five-year-olds he questioned in Canada considered that "animals can be naughty". The majority were ignorant of "the reality of killing animals for meat". Or perhaps they were unwilling to admit it. They seem to have begun already on the self-deceptions that adults regularly adopt to justify atrocities. Whereas 76 per cent answered "Yes" to the question "Do mother animals love their babies the same way that your mother loves you?", only 31 per cent considered that animals experience pain in the same way that humans do.

It is from this kindergarten point that Clark begins his far from childish meditation, the point where "we have fallen (as it were) woken up to find ourselves embroiled in a world where many different creatures compete or work with us, recognize our footsteps and remember points that we have forgotten". About all these creatures, he says, we have to decide how correctly we are reading their "expressions of love, anger, fear or doubt", and we have no more reason to mistrust our readings when they concern creatures of other species than when they concern humans, though obviously we should be on the lookout for items that are species-specific and though we can, in the case of both beasts and men, be mistaken.

Such mistakes do not, he remarks, prove "that we can never rely on our senses", since "my evidence that I am sometimes mistaken is precisely that I

am not always mistaken", since "the whole notion of seeing is drawn from the public realm in which we see stones and trees and people" and since "we perceive creatures in the world... doing things, and our perceptions cannot be isolated from our awareness (sometimes but not always erroneous) of their purposes".

The burden of his book is to dissuade scientists, and in particular ecologists and sociobiologists, from the notion that they are doing something scientific when, discounting the awareness that goes with perceptions, they try to adopt "aseptic" attitudes and vocabulary in their accounts of animals' behaviour.

It is unfortunately easy to pick out the biologists in a gathering largely of philosophers: they are the ones who raise sceptical quibbles about any postulate, urge that we never know what anyone else is thinking, that morality is only a matter of inarguable taste, that only what is "scientifically verifiable" has any meaning. These dogmas, invented by philosophers, have few serious philosophical advocates today...

An attempt to describe animals "without too much of empathy, solely in terms of what they 'do'", may he says, be acceptable as a professional discipline, but if scientists forget that it is merely a convenient convention and allow it to expand into the assumption "that animals have no 'inner life', no purposes of a human kind", then it goes beyond what can be reasonably asserted and is in danger of doing violence to the true facts of animal existence. It is, I incidentally suspect, in an attempt to borrow the modern prestige of science, but an attempt which has, sadly, picked on a pseudo-scientific rather than a scientific trapping, that some novelists have persuaded themselves that it is more realistic to describe a character as sitting in front of two vertical pieces of wood with a horizontal piece placed across them than to admit that reality includes the perceptions which the novelist and this reader share of the "public realm" and of the human purposes of craftsmen and manufacturers and simply describe the character as sitting at a desk.

His spirit is not in the least schoolmarmy, but what in effect Clark presents is a well-documented survey of present ethical thought in which he points to the places where muddled concepts or concepts adopted without recognition of their implications are making a nonsense of science. After all, if you deny that animal life can sustain consciousness, communication, co-operation and adherence to truth, you are proclaiming that science, an activity of human animals, is impossible. Clark's exercise is of practical and moral, as well as academic, value. What you might call the de-anthropomorphizing myth about animals, which is at present peddled in the name of science, provides a justifiable background to the atrocities we commit on animals, violating their bodies and souls along with our own moral principles, and it introduces a much grosser distortion than Aesop's anthropomorphizing fictions ever did into our appreciation of animals' true nature.

Clark points to the muddles that result when biologists confuse "function" with "goal", when they use such terms as "aggression" and "dominance" in senses that are both non-colloquial and imprecise (and that are open to distortion into right-wing political propaganda), and when they expect living systems to correspond to ideal models derived from Galilean models of moving objects: and

## Epitaph for a Good Mouser

Take, Lord, this soul of furred, unblemished worth.  
The stum of all I loved and caught on earth.  
Quick was my holy purpose and my cause.  
I'de into the mercy of thy claws.

Anne Stevenson

disruptive forces. He shows that it violates sense as well as decency to suppose that you can construct, with a living organism, an experiment that alters, by mutilation, only one faculty at a time. He remarks the many cases where evolutionists forget evolution and behave like believers in special (though for one species only) creation, assuming a discontinuity between humans ("free", "intelligent") and the animals with whom they share an ancestry ("genetically programmed", "instinctual"). He demonstrates that the biological arguments that can be used to banish altruism from animal life can equally be wielded to show egoism to be impossible. He protests against the unsentient habit, of which not only scientists are guilty, of ignoring the individuality of animals: "Ethologists (and all of us) talk far too much about what 'the wolf does, or 'the chimpanzee', thus hiding from ourselves the actual diversity and unrepeatability of living forms." We forget, but Clark reminds us of, the genius among macaques "who found out how to separate wheat from sand

by throwing handfuls of the two combined into the sea".

An evolutionist who is mindful of evolution, Clark identifies "the central problem of mammals" as "what to do with the males?" (This question, which sets problems for mammals in their own social organizations, is also what makes it impossible for humans to exploit them – and birds – at once humanely and economically. It is the question that inevitably turns vegetarians like Clark and myself into vegans. You can't eat milk and eggs without conniving at the killing of the male animals who can produce no marketable commodity except their very selves.) In the solutions to that central problem that are put forward by the diverse social organizations of mammals Clark seems to locate an evolutionary growing point or flexibility point that may be the source of our particular human susceptibility to culture, which, as he points out, often appears supererogatory from the point of view of evolution. (I hope that, in perceiving this in his perception of the problem about the males, I am not

## The apes of Arnhem

R. A. Hinde

FRANS DE WAAL

Chimpanzee Politics: Power and Sex among Apes  
223pp. Cape. £8.95.  
0 224 01874 4

This excellent book achieves the dual goal which eludes so many writers about animal behaviour – it will both fascinate the non-specialist and be seen as an important contribution to science.

The study of animal behaviour had to escape from the excesses of out-and-out subjectivism and anthropomorphism. The rise of modern ethology was due in large part to the realization that although the behaviour of animals may be beautifully attuned to their way of life, it is often apparently stupid in ways that force us to think of it as mechanical and reflex-like. The intricacy of the behaviour which enables a songbird to rear its young is incredible, but how can a bird be so stupid as to ignore a youngster who falls out of the nest, or to rear a cuckoo? Ethologists properly adopted a rigid economy-of-hypothesis approach: behaviour must be explained in terms of the simplest possible mechanisms, without imputing human subjective states or cognitive capacities. This of course introduces a bias – explanations can never be too complex, but they can be too simple. It has in fact recently become clear that ethologists have often tended to underestimate the abilities of the animals they studied, and especially those of the higher primates.

But this does not mean that the economy-of-hypothesis approach is the wrong one, and it certainly does not mean that ethologists should wallow in anthropomorphism. The dangers that beset the interpretation of animal behaviour can be illustrated by an observation of Jane Goodall's. When trying to catch a monkey, male chimpanzees may isolate it in a group of trees and then each stands at the foot of one tree, blocking off all possible avenues of escape. This looks like cooperative hunting but, as Jane Goodall pointed out, each male could be playing himself in the position where he as an individual stood the greatest chance of "catching" the monkey, without any intention of

cooperating. "Cooperative hunting" might describe the end result, but could have no implications about mechanism. For such reasons, there is much to be said for stripping explanations of behaviour down to their bare essentials, adding complexities only when necessary.

But there is another problem. Complex cognitive abilities are often exhibited in individual solutions to particular problems. If each individual solves a problem in his own way, the statistical tools properly beloved by the ethologist may be unable to detect any effect on the average behaviour of the individuals in the group. One solution to this difficulty lies in impeccably documented descriptions of the behaviour of the individuals. From such descriptions one can assess just what cognitive abilities are "reasonably necessary" to explain the behaviour. The accumulation of such instances may, of due course, indicate the sort of level of complexity at which the animal functions.

It is here that the importance of Frans de Waal's book lies. It concerns a group of about twenty-five chimpanzees living in a two-acre enclosure in the Arnhem Zoo. The animals' behaviour has been carefully recorded by a succession of students, and de Waal provides a precise but eminently readable and indeed exciting account of the personal fortunes of several of the individuals in the colony over a period of some years.

Although this is a breeding colony, it is not a natural situation. In Arnhem Zoo all animals are enclosed in an area large by zoo standards but small in comparison to their natural ranges; a female was boss for a while; and food is provided. According to the work of Jane Goodall and her colleagues in Tanzania, in nature each mother and her offspring would be occupying a small home range, overlapping little with those of other females, whilst the males would range alone or together over an area embracing the home ranges of a number of females. In nature, no group bossed by a female has been recorded.

But that is irrelevant to the theme of de Waal's book, which sets out not to generalize about chimpanzee behaviour, but to document some of the complexities observed in this particular group. The focus is on the struggles which resulted in the rise to power successively of three males, Yeroen, Luit, and Nikkie. The struggles for power involved not just these three individuals, but many others too in coalitions and apparent subtle manipulations which, over periods of months or years, resulted in gradual swings of allegiance; these underpinned the confrontations between the current boss and his would-be successor.

This complexity requires de Waal first to present his dramatic personae. It is easy for the layman to imagine that all individuals of an animal species are pretty much alike – an extension of the traditional European's view of

offending his manifest and honourable feminism.) He finds it significant that broken apart and formed new species but have left us still all of the same species, capable of interbreeding. It is not disagree. Cultural groups seem to me patent attempts at or moves in the direction of new species. The language barrier that hedges in a cultural group is, so to speak, a barrier to interbreeding. I do, however, remain that, although we Homines Sapiens are now, we have not always been the only humanoid species.

Perhaps it is from the ethical systems he discerns in the other species that our human moral systems have evolved. There are clearly speculations of an evolutionary character gathered at the tip of Dr Clark's pen. I trust he will articulate them in a further book. For the present, however, for, that is, the next five years or so, this book contains matter quite enough to engage the thoughts and the imagination of readers philosophical, scientific or common.

Chinamen. Nothing could be further from the truth. Careful observation reveals consistent differences between the behaviour of individuals. The way in which de Waal describes these consistencies are worth noting. Sometimes he uses objective behavioural terms – Nikkie's "intimidation displays are characterised by spectacular leaps and somersaults." Often he uses a human analogy: Puist "behaves in a lesbian fashion now and then"; "Mama enjoys enormous respect in the community. Her central position is comparable to that of a grandmother in a Spanish Chinese family." And sometimes he unashamedly ascribes human characteristics to the animals: "Besides this malevolence, Puist has another trait which we might call deceitful or mendacious". The purists may shy at this, but it seems to me a useful way of describing the complex behaviour these animals show without necessarily imputing all the complexities of Machiavellian manipulation.

Much of the book is taken up with descriptions of the events that led to two power take-overs, the dynamic nature of the apparent stability in intervening periods, and the variety of ways in which sexual privileges were gained and granted. These chapters illustrate an important recent development in studies of non-human primates – the emphasis is not on what individuals do as on their relationships with each other. The individual characters described earlier are seen in interaction – and the resulting rivalries, coalitions and manipulations are described in detail. De Waal adds to the evidence that chimpanzees may lie to gain their ends, describes the tantrums that they show when frustrated, follows conflict and reconciliation, demonstrates circumspection and opportunism, respect and jealousy, telling tales and friendships, and all this against a background of the complex network of relationships between the individuals in the colony. It would be impossible to achieve this without using the words we usually use to describe the complexities of human social intercourse. The reader may feel, as I did, that de Waal occasionally goes too far. But at the same time he takes greater care than most previous primatologists to document the evidence: the reader can understand why de Waal used the labels that he did, and can form an independent judgment on the degree of cognitive complexity it is necessary to impute to chimpanzees to explain the behaviour they show. The conclusion is I think clear: de Waal's data completely demolish previous knowledge of chimpanzee behaviour to reveal a degree of cognitive complexity which will surprise some, but not all, primatologists.

The title is unfortunate, but a comparison between two of the most and China-Soviet relations apparently prompted the writer of the foreword, who is less critical than the author, to suggest it. A pity, but it does not detract from the whole.

HENRY KISSINGER

Years of Upheaval  
1283pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson/  
Michael Joseph. £15.95.  
0 7181 2115 5

Metternich, Bismarck, Disraeli, the classic trio of great "foreign ministers" were not in fact foreign ministers but chief ministers, heads of their respective governments; and Talleyrand too was in practice a chief executive at the time of his main achievement, at the Congress of Vienna. For some foreign ministers properly defined, the example of those figures has been unfortunate, tempting them to try to steer the ship of state without having its command. Unable to include domestic affairs within his own sphere of responsibility, lacking authority over the military chiefs, the foreign minister who is no more than that, must depend on the chief executive to sustain his policies – often while being his rival, real or suspected, and correspondingly likely to be undermined at crucial moments.

No wonder then that those foreign ministers who have tried to forge policies as deep and as broad as those of the classic trio, or have sought merely to imitate their fancy diplomatic footwork, have been doomed to failure. Schemes of policy aborted halfway, or just as disastrously diverted into unintended paths, and a diplomatic tone made up of dissonant voices fatally off-key (obstinate when firmness was the aim, or merely weak when a yielding resilience was intended) – those have been the usual results of ambitious ministerial foreign policies. Wiser men placed in that office, or those simply less ambitious, have been content to manage affairs from day to day, with no real scheme of sustained action. Such ministers are held in high esteem by their departmental officials, since foreign ministries everywhere are structured not to make policy but rather to avoid any departure from continuity.

In such cases, the foreign minister is merely the chief administrator of his country's diplomacy, the executor of policies made by others (who may know too little of world affairs to set the right goals); or else he becomes the keeper of established policies, shaped by the circumstances of the past and lovingly preserved. That may seem a prudent enough course to follow, and so it is – but only for the minister himself, who can thus easily avoid blame for the failure of any new initiative. For his country and government on the other hand, a policy that preserves continuity because of sheer inertia can easily turn out to be very costly, and may even become highly dangerous, since powerful forces far more active than foreign ministries are loose on the world scene, and these will demand either some adjustment, or else energetic reactions.

With modern states so organized that foreign affairs are the concern of

specialized bureaucracies, and with the enormous growth in the domestic activities of all governments, the stage is set for the systemic failures of foreign policy characteristic of our century of wars: the press of domestic matters prevents the chief executive from devoting sufficient attention to foreign affairs while, on the other hand, the foreign minister lacks the wide-ranging authority that the exercise of his function properly requires, notably control over military policy. This systemic defect has been a major factor in the spectacular foreign-policy disasters of our times: August 1914, shared by all and notoriously precipitated by the crippled departmental diplomacy pursued by Britain, France and Germany; the inter-war French failure that resulted from the fatal disharmony between an alliance-building foreign policy based on the lesser powers around Germany, and a military policy which renounced the offensive capability needed to protect such lesser allies (which could only have diluted German strength on many fronts in May 1940, if the French had protected each in its own moment of danger); and since 1945, with war between the Great Powers duly avoided by the awesome fears that nuclear weapons so beneficially evoke, Great-Power wars against lesser enemies – notably the Anglo-French Suez adventure of 1956 and, on a far greater scale, America's war in Indochina.

In the case of Suez, the Foreign Office and the Quai d'Orsay were left as the impotent spectators of (British) military planning that ignored the realities of world politics: if the deed could be done at all, it could only be done swiftly, and not by the leisurely process of a full-scale amphibious landing mounted by an armada that steamed slowly across the full width of the Mediterranean (Eden's premise was the easy removal of Nasser; the military premise was that the Egyptians could only be defeated by large-scale war – and the blatant contradiction was not allowed to disturb the decision). As for Indochina, there the worthy aim of resisting Hanoi's imperialism was perverted by all the follies of excess and bureaucratic self-indulgence that a luxuriously well-supplied military structure could devise, because there was only McNamara's scientific misunderstanding of war to provide it with guidance, instead of a coherent foreign policy from which purposeful military directives could be obtained. When such a policy was finally achieved under Henry Kissinger, Hanoi was brought to the very edge of capitulation, being saved only by the unreasoning domestic opposition to the war which all the errors of the past had by then engendered.

We can therefore recognize the most important factor – that enabled Kissinger to become a true successor to the great "foreign ministers" of the past: thanks to the combination of Nixon's virtues and of his great

# The sinuous diplomatic dancer

Edward N. Luttwak

weakness. Watergate, Kissinger was able to act more or less as a chief executive during 1973-74; his elevation to Secretary of State on September 22, 1973, merely registered – and grossly understated – his effective control over America's external conduct. To be sure, with a president sinking into impotence as a result of the daily unfolding of the Watergate scandal, any respectable and competent figure could have enjoyed security of tenure as Secretary of State, since his resignation would have inflicted another great wound. But if Kissinger

Congress originally created to make itself more powerful in foreign affairs. But Kissinger, by reason of his personal authority and bureaucratic cunning, received much more than his share of the power that ineluctably flowed out of Nixon's afflicted White House, becoming steadily more powerful within the executive branch just as the executive in toto was losing ground to Congress. By the end, of course, Kissinger's pre-eminence had become hollow, since the executive he was able to dominate was itself

then manifest in the form of Congressional budget-making and restrictive legislation. Less than a decade has passed since those days and yet it is already very difficult to credit one's own memory: did so many academics, journalists and politicians really believe that the Viet Cong was an autonomous entity, dedicated to national liberation? Did they truly regard the Khmer Rouge as an improvement on Lon Nol's régime? Did they actually consider Hanoi's rulers to be men of benevolent temper? Of course they did – and since the deluded and the deceivers are still very active on the American scene, the mystification must be perpetuated in one form or another, to protect reputations made or amplified by opposition to the war.

In a society that is forgetful as well as forgiving, names that ought to evoke scorn still claim respect: one thinks of Richard Falk among the academics (not to speak of the deservedly forgotten band of the "Concerned Asia Scholars"), of Harrison Salisbury and the author of *Fire in the Lake* among the publicists; and then, of course, there is that whole crowd of columnists and reporters whose professional standing was acquired in the days when Nguyen Van Thieu was equated with Hitler and Le Duc Tho was presented as a latter-day Jefferson. This was the guilty élite that greeted William Shawcross's *Kissinger, Nixon and the Destruction of Cambodia* with such purposeful enthusiasm, since its distortions and documentary manipulations (relied in adulterous columns and lengthy uncritical reviews) served so well to obfuscate the obvious, namely that opposition to the war in Cambodia resulted in the victory of a régime which was, quite simply, homicidal. Conclusive evidence that the leaders of the Khmer Rouge acted by long-standing design was disregarded by Shawcross, who continually insinuated that it was the American bombing (of areas largely uninhabited, but used by North Vietnamese troops) that somehow transformed "agrarian reformers" into assassins. Only people with a very guilty conscience and with a whole past to live down would have filled for such myth-making, but then of course those characteristics do define quite accurately a large slice of today's opinion-making élite in the United States; hence Kissinger's documentary appendix, which is meant to expose some of the more glaring distortions in the Shawcross book.

The chapter itself is a record of Kissinger's visit to Indochina. Much of it deals with his time in Hanoi, where he encountered leaders for whom the Paris Agreement was merely a stepping-stone to further war, and war to the finish. Readers of the first volume of these memoirs will already have made the discovery that Kissinger can write rather well, having made the brief character sketch something of a speciality. If Kissinger has a weakness as a writer (a weakness which may



Masking tapes? Kissinger and Nixon, one of 190 illustrations from Gerald Scarph (168pp. Thames and Hudson. £6.95. 0 500 27268 9).

had been merely that and no more, the chances are that he would have achieved little or nothing in his office, since the potential for departmental anarchy built into the American system would then have asserted itself; without a lively presidential effort, each department will naturally tend to stifle the initiatives of all the others. The system of "checks and balances" of which the Americans are so proud was meant to apply to the branches of the government and not as between the departments of the executive branch, but it is manifest in great strength within its confines; thus the Americans can boast of the world's most elaborate machinery for immobilizing foreign affairs, especially now that each huge bureaucracy can exploit for its own obstructive purposes that whole jungle of restrictive legislation that

becoming impotent. But in the interval, before the second devolution caught up with the first, Kissinger had the opportunity to act more freely than any other modern Secretary of State. *Years of Upheaval*, the second volume of his memoirs, tells us what he made of the opportunity. And he did so much that the 1,214 pages of the book (not counting notes, index and a documentary appendix) are scarcely excessive, even though they cover a period of only nineteen months or so.

The first substantive chapter of *Years of Upheaval* reviews the deteriorating state of Indochina, afflicted by the relentless pressure of the North Vietnamese and their then allies on the ground, and by the equally destructive consequences of American domestic opposition to the war, by

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## Furnishing the troops

Valerie Pearl

RONALD HUTTON

*The Royalist War Effort 1642-1646*  
271pp. Longman. £12.  
0 582 50301 9

It is unwise to judge a book by its wrapper. From its dust-cover reproduction of the picture by Charles West Cope of Charles I raising his standard at Nottingham in 1642 (the romantic hero-king defying his enemies and rallying his friends), Ronald Hutton's *The Royalist War Effort 1642-1646* might be supposed by bookshop browsers to be another contribution to the cult of the Cavaliers. It is nothing of the kind. Dr Hutton's book is a painstaking examination of the military and financial organization of the Royalists - which is not blind to their faults and weaknesses or even to the occasional atrocities which were committed in the king's name (but not with his approval). It is based on detailed case studies of the areas mainly under royal control throughout most of the Civil War: Wales, the Marches and the West Midlands, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire and the twenty or so counties to the west of these. From these areas, for the most part religiously conservative and socially and economically backward, the king first gathered an army and then found the resources to furnish it throughout the war. It was there, in the Vendée of the English Revolution, that his cause went down to utter defeat and his supporters staged their last stand.

Hutton argues that these Royalist areas of England and Wales the Civil War "did not arise inevitably from any fundamental, social, economic, religious or even political cleavage within local society. It was an artificial

insemination of violence into the local community". The traditional rulers of the country, the king and the Parliament, instead of promoting order and security, "set leading men of each county against each other to the ruin of themselves and their communities". He brings out the widespread indifference or hostility to either cause in most of the English counties upon which the Royalist war effort was to be based, making an exception for Herefordshire, Cumberland, Westmoreland and most of Wales, where the majority of the community displayed loyalty to the king. Birmingham, on the other hand, was always a fervid supporter of Parliament (in something of a momentary lapse from his customary objectivity, Hutton calls its parliamentarianism "virulent") but although he is right to say that we do not know why it was so partisan (not just because it was a manufacturing centre - no other Black Country semi-industrial town showed such partisanship), his stress on neutralism leads him at times to underestimate popular support for Parliament even though he recognizes that some of that support was a response to the plunder and rapacity of the Royalist armies.

Local apathy forced the king to raise his armed forces by private initiative. Hutton links his action to the establishment of a joint-stock company for the promotion of the war. The king's armies began virtually as private enterprises, the money given by individual supporters being used to attract recruits into regiments led by prominent Royalists. But such donations soon proved insufficient as the number of men under arms and the need for munitions grew. Before long, stringent taxation, forced loans and onerous exactions of all kinds had become common on both sides. England before the Civil War was not a premier military power and

Englishmen successfully resisted half-hearted royal attempts to improve the country, the king and the Parliament, instead of promoting order and security, "set leading men of each county against each other to the ruin of themselves and their communities". He brings out the widespread indifference or hostility to either cause in most of the English counties upon which the Royalist war effort was to be based, making an exception for Herefordshire, Cumberland, Westmoreland and most of Wales, where the majority of the community displayed loyalty to the king. Birmingham, on the other hand, was always a fervid supporter of Parliament (in something of a momentary lapse from his customary objectivity, Hutton calls its parliamentarianism "virulent") but although he is right to say that we do not know why it was so partisan (not just because it was a manufacturing centre - no other Black Country semi-industrial town showed such partisanship), his stress on neutralism leads him at times to underestimate popular support for Parliament even though he recognizes that some of that support was a response to the plunder and rapacity of the Royalist armies.

All this was to be changed terribly within a few years. It has been calculated that fewer than a thousand men were in the regular service of Charles I before the outbreak of hostilities. Within a year of conscription over 110,000 were under arms. It was a proportion of soldiers to civilians not to be matched until the rise of the armies of revolutionary France at the end of the next century. Suddenly, too, the under-taxed gentry who had enjoyed a system of self-assessment for tax much to their advantage, found that sterner régimes fighting wars made ever higher demands for money. In Oxfordshire, for example Royalist orders under the contribution treaty brought in an amount seventeen times higher than the highest sums paid as Ship Money and ten times higher than the Parliamentary Subsidy of 1641. Life and property were no longer secure. In the areas of battle and of advancing and retreating armies, the tides of war brought their unhappy accompaniments: long drawn-out sieges, terroristic cavalry raids, strategically destroyed houses, sometimes including the razing of whole suburbs, the hated free quarter, conscription of materials of war, disease, which may have killed more than fell on the field, and plunder and looting.

In the event, the raising of local finance was not a success for the king. The excise produced little except in Worcester; irregular levies imposed to meet emergencies removed much of the money which would have gone to meet regular taxation; free quarter, even when, as sometimes happened, it was later "redeemed" by paid-up promissory notes, frequently soaked up all the available cash which a countryman had to spare for the county taxes; the conscription of the materials of war such as horses, carts and even farm implements, although nominally subject to compulsory purchase, left the victims without the means to pay the taxes and was sometimes indistinguishable from the pillage and looting common enough without any pretence to legality. But apart from all these burdens, the war seriously impoverished the Royalist counties. The trade with London, of central importance in the national economy, was lost; attempts to develop Bristol as an alternative entrepôt and with it the possibility of exploiting the valuable North Welsh cattle trade, were foiled by Parliament's possession of Gloucester, an effective check of the extensive trade and communications system based on the Severn Valley; the traditional fairs and markets could not be held in many places because they provided tempting

targets for plundering soldiers. Hutton concludes that the central problem of Royalist territory was that "it was not merely a base but a battlefield and a wasteland". The problem was also the most disturbed, a problem made more acute as parliamentary pressure increased.

Hutton describes how Charles replaced with expert military commanders the generals whom he had first chosen more for their social position than for their prowess in the field. Such men stood aloof from the quarrels of the gentry and were ruthless in their prosecution of the war and in their exploitation of all its opportunities. The policy was generally successful and the commanders regained much of the ground their predecessors had lost, but at the cost of increasing hostility to the Royalist provinces, which ranged from groups of gentry seeking to raise an army capable of controlling the regular troops to armed uprisings in the remoter country areas. The challenge to the king was contained and the generals restored confidence in the Royalist cause. In this connection Hutton points to the outstanding achievements of the two princes, Rupert and Maurice, in administration and military leadership, a reassessment of their abilities and characters, which he believes to have been much maligned. But for the king it was a false dawn. The Royalists, perhaps overconfident in taking on greatly superior forces, went down to a shattering defeat at Naseby in June 1645 in which their main armies were destroyed. The king appealed for fresh sacrifices from the richest communities still left to him but without avail, for he no longer had the power to coerce unwilling and recalcitrant populations. Thereafter the Royalist heartlands were gradually overwhelmed and the first Civil War was over.

Hutton sums up his valuable and freshly informative work by writing that "in the last analysis it was the local community, not Parliament which defeated Charles, not from hatred of his cause but from hatred of the war itself". It is a fashionable formulation but one wonders what meaning it has. Elsewhere Hutton recognizes that "ultimately it did not matter if the local population was alienated from the royal cause, as long as the king possessed an army with which to terrorize the provinces into providing him with the materials of war". The army was destroyed at Naseby but what if it had survived or forced back or even been victorious, as might have happened but for the fortunes of war? Can we be sure that local "hatred of the war" was the all-powerful motor which would and did defeat the king?

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MUSIC

## Early, middle and late

Denis Matthews

ALAN TYSON (Editor)

*Beethoven Studies 3*  
298pp. Cambridge University Press.  
£25.  
0 521 24131 6

It is five years since the second of Alan Tyson's collections of *Beethoven Studies* appeared, and though the increase in price of this new volume is alarming it is, one hastens to add, a more generous offering of nearly 300 pages. Most of the writers are familiar colleagues but two, Christopher Reynolds and Sieghard Brandenburg, are new to the series. Five of the eight essays are derived from papers presented during a Beethoven conference at the University of North Carolina in 1977, which year also marked the retirement of William S. Newman, well known for his works on the history of the Sonata and on Beethoven "performing practice"; and Dr Tyson offers the present symposium to Professor Newman "as a token of respect".

It now goes without saying that the *Studies* are scrupulously presented and annotated, and that they open up yet more areas and aspects of their rewarding subject. There is, as before, a fair balance between analysis, research and more general commentary, and between the music

(and the life) of the early, middle and late periods, with a special coverage of the remarkable growth of style from the early Vienna works to the "Eroica" and the "Rasumovsky" quartets. There are however some new thoughts about antecedents for the "Heiliger Dankgesang" of op 132, and a detailed transcript of Beethoven's diary, or agonizing time in his personal life that nevertheless bridged the gap between the "late middle" manner of the Eighth Symphony and the decisive third-period mastery of the "Hammerklavier" Sonata.

The popular tripartite divisions have been called "simplistic", but as Douglas Johnson says at the start of the first essay: "It is too late to tamper with the three periods." Yet even "early" Beethoven is a vague enough term, ranging from the juvenile Dressler Variations of 1782 to the time of the first two symphonies and the op 18 quartets. Mr Johnson finds a significant subdivision in the years 1794 and 1795 alone. They were in fact "decisive years", and in which Beethoven, after a year of study with Haydn and only too aware of his teacher's supreme mastery of the symphony and the quartet, "was coming to grips for the first time systematically with the most sophisticated elements of Classical style". He avoided a direct confrontation by applying himself to other forms, the piano sonata and the piano trio, but expanded them to

symphonic proportions: though the over-used word "protections" seems an unhappy description of the young Beethoven's lasting achievement in, for example, the C minor Trio, the A major and C major sonatas from op 2, even the C major Piano Concerto which we call "no 1". The musicologist must claim objectivity at all costs, however, and no one can suggest that Beethoven kept straight into a complete mastery of large-scale forms. He consciously delayed his approach to the symphony and quartet, and the six op 18 quartets themselves show a disparity of attainment.

Richard Kramer, like Douglas Johnson, is a skilled analyst: he examines the strange introduction to the finale of op 18 no 6, which Beethoven called "La Malinconia", in the light of the sketches, and somehow relates its harmonic ambiguities to the differing extremes of assessment it inspires, emotional and structural - or, as he puts it, empirical and intellectual. Technical analysis creates its own jargon, and Kramer's attempts at humanizing it still make for difficult reading.

This conflict in quality and position of stress, small in bar 21, grows to a central issue by bar 28. Four bars of crescendo peak at the *sfz* on the second beat of bar 28, where the stiff pattern of root motion is finally broken. The dominant of F, folding back to reinforce its antecedent, effects a kind of closure.

Those who persevere with Kramer's involved style will find him rewarding on the sketches, which are printed and labelled for reference in an appendix. The next two essays are happily juxtaposed, for they deal with the "Prometheus" Variations op 35 and the "Eroica" which adopted the theme and some of the same variation-procedures in its finale. Christopher Reynolds relates and analyses the material in the "Kessler" and "Wielhorsky" sketchbooks for op 35, noting overlaps, and ends by tabulating all the known sketches, variation by variation: yet finds room to discuss the problems of the form, the ordering of the variations, and the influence of Beethoven's much earlier contrapuntal studies. Since the first glimmerings of the "Eroica" follow the op 35 sketches in "Wielhorsky" it is natural enough to move on to Lewis Lockwood's account of the symphony's first movement.

Under the general heading of "perspectives" he analyses the analysts themselves, touching on E. T. A. Hoffmann, Nietzsche, Grove and Tovey, and expectedly spreading himself on Schenker. He quotes an amusing account of Wagner, the great harmonist in search of the *melos*, singing through the exposition of the first movement and saying "Now then, isn't pure melody enough? Must you always have your crazy theories along with it?" Lockwood then gives his own views on "compositional strategy" and, almost inevitably, turns to the "Landsberg 6" sketches for elucidation.

But the most lucid essay in the volume comes from its editor, Dr Tyson, who deals with the sources of the "Rasumovsky" quartets. Even when searching for apples and moons in watermarks, or examining stab-holes and ink-blot in scattered leaves, his zest is gently infectious and his courteous style infinitely readable. He throws interesting light on the group as a whole. Beethoven's desire to write a whole quartet "quite apart from" Rasumovsky's invitation, and the effect of his busy middle-period orchestral activity on the "symphonic strivings" of the first two of them, there is the entertaining thought, too, that at a late stage Beethoven considered dedicating the quartets to his old patron Lehnovsky, with whom he had patched up a quarrel, which would have removed Rasumovsky's main claim to immortality.

Joseph Kerman explores a feature of sonata form, so important in Beethoven but often neglected or ill-served by analysts: the coda. The unpredictable behaviour of a coda is referred back to Haydn and especially to Mozart. Beethoven admired (and emulated) the quiet ending to the first movement of Mozart's C minor Concerto; but the idea of a climactic coda, as in the finale of the "Jupiter", was carried to unprecedented lengths in Beethoven's second-period works (like the "Eroica") and often involved the "resolution" or "fulfilment" of an unstable or incomplete first theme. Kerman ends by admiring the disarming simplicity of the coda to the "Must es sein" finale of the very last quartet, op 135, and remarks that "the old technique can still be discerned in the most visionary works of Beethoven's last period".

The rebirth of old techniques in a new context bears more obviously on the Lydian Hymn of the op 132 quartet, and Sieghard Brandenburg has undertaken a formidable research into possible models, antecedents and influences. Beethoven's limited experience of Palestrina, even of Bach, was more than counterbalanced by his studies of recent treatises on church music - Vogler, Kuech, Türk - that he was known to possess. The writer detects the effect of these and other sources on the composer's quasi-modal procedures, yet again with reference to the sketches, and agrees with A. B. Marx's assertion that Beethoven's intuition as an artist overruled any attempt at "antiquarianism". But the religious implications of op 132 are clear enough, and his faith, though personal and undogmatic, had been strengthened during the previous decade. His *Tagebuch* of 1812-1818 is ample testimony, with entries ranging from trivial day-to-day memoranda to self-communings, prayers, proverbs, and copious transcripts from poetical, philosophical and religious writings. It is a "journal intime" revealing, as Maynard Solomon says, an "unsuspected variety of absorption from Hölderlin and Plutarch to Schiller and Kant, and with a special interest in Indian and Eastern philosophies. Solomon prefaces his transcript and explanation of the contents of the *Tagebuch* with a sixteen-page summing-up of the chequered history of the manuscript and its copies.

In short, *Beethoven Studies 3* lives up to the expectations of the series, and sets a standard of scholarship and thoroughness worthy of its subject.

## The farmer's factotums

Joan Thirsk

ANN KUSSMAUL

*Servants in Husbandry in Early Modern England*  
233pp. Cambridge University Press.  
£19.50.  
0 521 23566 9

The word "servant" is not often used in our descriptions of present-day society, so sensitive are we to the association between service and subservience. But in Early Modern England it was a proud and classless word: some of the greatest lords in the realm welcomed the chance to acknowledge themselves servants to a yet greater lord. So Ann Kussmaul has to define exactly the function of her servants, and she does this with admirable precision. Servants in husbandry were different from day labourers (who lived out), and different again from apprentices, who were taken on for seven years to be trained in the ways of farming. Servants in husbandry were normally hired for one year only, lived under the farmer's roof, ate at his table, and performed all and any tasks on the farm. They were usually male (the female servants were more likely to work in the house), and were aged between fifteen and twenty-four years. After that, they reckoned to marry and stay out in one place; if lucky, they had saved up enough money to settle on a smallholding, otherwise they worked as day labourers, or they did both.

A routine of moving on from one farming family to another admirably suited the needs of young men in a restless phase of their lives, and Dr Kussmaul reckons that around sixty per cent in this age group followed this course. This is but one of many statistics which she supplies in an array of tables, graphs, and maps drawn from settlement papers, parish registers, petty and quarter-session records, and nineteenth-century censuses, covering all parts of the kingdom. The archival investigation lying behind this book is formidable. Dr Kussmaul is an elegant writer

with a jaunty style, and her numerical analysis, and supporting apparatus of explanation, are kept firmly in their place, some of it in appendices, so that her narrative flows easily.

It tells an intriguing story of service in husbandry in long historical perspective. Though the institution has now passed from the scene, it underwent two distinct cycles of flourishing. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, declining in the seventeenth, reviving in the eighteenth, and declining again in the nineteenth century, it died out first in the south of England when agricultural improvements called for a different system of short hirings of labourers for less than a year. Living-in servants were fast disappearing from the south by 1830, and most rapidly of all from the grain-growing belt that runs from Dorset to East Anglia. They survived much longer in the highland zone, being still useful in country with rugged terrain, small farms, and industrial by-employment.

The decline of service in husbandry in the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, stemmed from labour shortages, caused by the development of many new openings in industry. Yet it also stemmed from changes in the nature of agricultural tasks, though this dimension is not explored. Dr Kussmaul obviously takes pleasure in the aesthetic beauty of a neat, or, in her own words, "elegant" correlation between different phenomena in a historical situation, and she does not allow anything to defeat her powers to explain. But, changes in mid-seventeenth-century agriculture, and industry were complex, more complex than "the" envisages. She again simplifies the decline of the institution in southern England in the mid-nineteenth century: the explanation offered here does not accommodate her own clear evidence of its persistence in south-western and south-eastern England.

So the tangled knot of explanation for the rise and fall of service in husbandry is not fully unraveled. One place of evidence, worthy of investigation, is embedded in the

Tull's fulminations against his labourers before he resorted to the use of machines in his fields in the early eighteenth century. He vented his spleen not only on the labourers, but also on the statutes, and on the judgments of JPs in Berkshire in local hiring disputes. The law, or its interpretations, was evidently undergoing change. But all in all, Dr Kussmaul's description of one way of getting labour on to the farm, set firmly in this long time-perspective, is skilfully executed, and a model of agreeable history-writing that all can enjoy.

## The English end

John Bossy

COLM LENNON

*Richard Stanihurst the Dubliner, 1547-1618. A Biography, with a Stanihurst Text On Ireland's Past.*  
186pp. Irish Academic Press. £12.50.  
0 7165 0069 8

Colm Lennon's short book belongs to what might be termed the Fine Gael school of early-modern Irish history, concerned with the contributions of English-speaking inhabitants to Irish tradition, particularly to constitutional precedents for a view of Irish nationhood in which the descendants of the two historical nations of medieval Ireland, the Irish-speaking and the English-speaking, can find a congenial home. The protagonist of this view among Irish historians is Brendan Bradshaw, of whom Lennon declares himself a follower, and among Irish public figures Garret Fitzgerald. In presenting the Elizabethan English/Irish scholar and (eventual) Catholic convert Richard Stanihurst as a forerunner of this tradition, Lennon has set himself a difficult task, since Stanihurst is usually thought of as a radical anti-Qual who identified the

progress of civility and indeed of Christianity in Ireland with the diffusion of English language and institutions. According to Lennon this is incorrect. He concedes that Stanihurst provided his Oxford tutor Edmund Campion with most of the information for the latter's anti-Gaelic *History of Ireland*, information which Stanihurst republished as his own in *Holinshed's Chronicle*; but he had a "developing consciousness" of the Gaelic Irish dimension, and by about 1600 had come round to a position which anticipated that of Bradshaw.

Lennon bases this revised view largely on two pieces of evidence: Stanihurst's second account of the Irish, published as *De rebus in Hibernia gestis in Antwerp in 1584* (and given in translation as an appendix to this book); and a passage from a letter written in Spain in 1593 about the arrival of a Gaelic Irish delegation to seek support from Philip II. *De rebus* certainly seems more sympathetic towards the Gaelic Irish than the earlier account; at least it absolves them from the charges of nomadism and eating raw meat. There does seem some kind of a change here. On the other hand, Lennon's explanation for it, that Stanihurst had become a Catholic by the time he published the book, is, as so often, convincing. Stanihurst had been part of the circle of

classical scholars around Justus Lipsius at Leiden, and this, if it were in further examination, might provide a better explanation. The other piece of evidence seems to depend on a misunderstanding of a text which is mainly taken up with derogatory comments on the Gaelic Irish, and certainly does not reveal Stanihurst in 1593, equating them with the English. Lennon notes Stanihurst's friendship with his fellow (English) traveller Richard Verstegan, but not the racist.

The book contains much useful information, and is welcome in a field it will have been worth while to do nothing more than revive interest in Stanihurst's, amazing and Hopkins-like translation of Virgil's English hexameters ("The sky the sky the great bounding vault, the thund'ring Rathleith...").

A collection of eight essays on *Ballet Studies* (224pp. Head Press. £6. 0 94920 01 5) recently been published to commemorate the seven hundredth anniversary of the presentation of the College's first Statute in 1290. Subjects covered range from the Ballet Trinity Laboratory and the

Michael Tanner

HUGH MACDONALD

*Berlioz*  
261pp. Dent. £8.95.  
0 460 03156 2

Berlioz remains a case, or a *cause*. While there are few serious music-lovers who do not respond to some parts of the larger works, and to the whole of some of the smaller ones, notably *Les nuits d'été*, there remains a major division of opinion between those for whom he is one of the supreme originals of music, and those for whom the extraordinary in his work is merely odd, the singularity of his structures simply formlessness, and the apparent impetus of his music an illusion engendered by prodigious exertions in which he runs as fast as possible in order to remain in the same place.

Hugh Macdonald has written, under these controversial circumstances, a remarkably calm book, as perhaps befits the Master Musician's series, in which his is one of the more satisfactory contributions. Macdonald is well known as an expert on Berlioz, but he has eschewed the partisanship so characteristic of earlier writings on the subject, notably by W. J. Turner and Jacques Barzun. While his moderation of tone is to be welcomed, one might also feel that in presenting so balanced an estimate of Berlioz, in which praise and reservation or downright condemnation are handed out so judiciously, he has not confronted fully the fact that Berlioz will never be granted rest by the musical community, and that it may well be an essential element in his fascination that he excites unending controversy.

Macdonald old-fashionedly insists that Berlioz's works can only be understood as an emanation of his extraordinary and colourful personality. An insistence one may welcome. But again he evades the point that, though it is hard to imagine anyone who could resist the personality as it is revealed in the letters, the *Mémoires*, and *Evenings in the Orchestra*, Berlioz's art does remain to many of us a perpetual disappointment. One's expectations are constantly being thwarted, and one should move decisively into the first movement, makes me want to admire his art for the qualities he himself described it as possessing: "passionate expression, rhythmic ardour, rhythmic

animation, and unexpected turns". But the level of achievement seems to me simply too uneven, so that listening to any of his longer works is always an unsettling process. Having been assured that the penny drops if I listen often enough, I try again, and not in any dogged spirit, and find that it's the temperature and intensity of the music which, if they don't drop, fluctuate excessively. Just as, using enormous forces, he turns out to be most often an intimate and far from noisy composer, so, composing huge structures, he turns out to be "essentially a minimalist", to use Nietzsche's phrase for someone else.

Nowhere is this clearer than in his masterpiece *Les Troyens*, which represents revivals, especially those at Covent Garden during the past twenty-five years, have shown does not stand up against the supreme monuments of opera. Macdonald enters few reservations about it, and fails to make the basic point that it is a series of tableaux, with very little cumulative impact. In one way this works to its advantage, for since the weaker tableaux - most of the ballet sequences, much of Act III, Aeneas' prolonged aria which seems to go on for ever in an attempt to express those "infinite regrets", but remains as wooden as everything else about that character - simply fall away. On the other hand, it means that the work as a whole fails to offer a powerful dramatic experience. In each part of *Les Troyens* the respective heroines command almost exclusive interest, the other characters taking life only from them; and the world-historical aspect of the work is forgotten in the sublime grief and intimate tragedy of Andromache in Act I, and supremely in Dido's final scenes, her music from "Je vais mourir" onwards is certainly one of the touchstones of musico-dramatic greatness.

So for me *Les Troyens* is not only Berlioz's greatest work but also his most representative. He was too shrewd, and therefore too despairing a student of humanity not to know that ideals of national greatness, or of a united and aspiring humanity, are pathetically unrealistic. Tragic greatness - the only kind that interests him - is to be found in unique individuals. The more he surrounds them with instrumental and choral pomp, the truer that insight is realized to be.

That, at any rate, is how I still feel. I would have been grateful if Macdonald had done something to attempt to convince me that this is an unjust view. But he seems intent on gaining for Berlioz a general recognition by

taming him. The extravagance of Berlioz's life is underplayed in the first, biographical section. The perennial strangeness of his art is minimized in the second section. And, as so often in this series, the author seems unclear about the level at which he should pitch his commentary. The plots of the operas are given briskly, as if the reader won't know that much; while a fair amount of the musical commentary, dealing in such matters as unusual key-relations between movements, and so on, is quite demanding and will hardly help the listener who has yet to hear the works discussed. A book such as this should either excite curiosity or deepen insight, or preferably both, as Wilfrid Mellers does brilliantly in his few pages devoted to Berlioz in *Man and Music*. Reliable as this book is, it only informs in an agreeable way.

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## to the editor

Nabokov's  
'Eugene Onegin'

Sir, — Mr Dmitri Nabokov's letter (October 1) is best left to answer itself. I have too much regard for the memory of Mr Nabokov *pere* to relish being provoked into a slanging match with Mr Nabokov *filio*.

I would only like to quote two further examples of Nabokovian fantasy, showing, this time, how the choice of an eccentric word in English (archaism or slang, for example) can kill some dead the finest effects of the original.

First, in translating Pushkin's touching image of the empty house (6 XXXII) as he describes the dead body of the poet Lensky, Nabokov writes: "The chateleine is gone. / But where, God wot!"

Secondly, in Pushkin's noble farewell to his reader (8 XLIX), we find: "Whoever you be, my reader — / friend, or foe — I wish with you to part at present as a pal."

My italics in both cases; comments are superfluous — except the obvious one that the English language is rather trickier than it looks.

In fact, with due respect to Mr Nabokov, I believe that the form into which a foreign poem is translated into English is something of secondary importance. It can be rhyming stanzas, blank verse, *vers libre* or plain prose. What matters surely is that the translation should seek to convey the spirit, as well as the letter, of the original; that it should be not only accurate but readable; and that above all it should not obscure the original poet by obtruding the translator's personality. After all, the interpreter at a state banquet is not expected to jump up and start dancing on the table.

CHARLES JOHNSTON.

32 Kingston House South, London SW7.

## Noel Coward

Sir, — To wax serious about the character of Noel Coward would be to quote the Master, too. I have spent my life in a relentless pursuit of the trivial. His only play possibly worth probing for depths to refute David Hare's suspicion that what he was "actually afraid of was thought" was *Post Mortem*, dismissed by Nicholas Shrimpton (October 1) as "embarrassing".

Coward's sole ambition was for success. Everything was sacrificed to this. He had an exceptional nose for the truly lasting values of sentimentality, jingoism, personality

worship, snobbery and incogitancy. Professional to his fingertips, he concentrated on employing such ingredients to the total exclusion of anything that might prompt his public to suspect they were being got at. In pursuit of this ideal, he had moments of being very funny indeed. If a talent to amuse was his only saving grace, it was a big one.

Esmé Wynne ("Stoj"), his oldest friend, who was unrelentingly religious from the age of five, and incapable of allowing her friends to wallow in the mire of human nature without throwing them the lifebelt of Absolute Truth, rebuked him regularly almost to his dying day. Although, temporarily, this infuriated him, what had hurt most was her giving up a promising stage career for marriage and religion. With time for neither, Noel had supposed their early collaboration was for ever.

But it would be wrong to assume he never experienced stirrings of social concern or moral doubt. Stoj, with deadly "sisterly" perception, knew "Pojo" better and from an earlier age than anyone including, in some respects, his mother, who could be curiously innocent about her son; and it was because, subjected from the age of eleven to Stoj's soaring flights of moral earnestness, he "knew better than he did", that he was so easily aroused to frustration and fury by her chastisements for his admittedly short descent from spiritual grace. If Noel was at the far end of the pole from Tolstoy, who held that the highest pursuit of art is to make men good by choice, he was at least intelligent enough to know he had never tried to realize his full potentiality.

An example of his reaction to my mother's provocations is his diary entry of June 6, 1952, an unfortunate choice by the *Diaries* editors, who seem to have confused judicious selection with censorship. Not only are his statements wildly inaccurate on several counts, but they strengthen a view of Coward as a witless, vindictive, pompous, disloyal and spoiled child rather than as a middle-aged man, who, for all his failings, was still capable of loyalty, affection, and of acknowledging that others had a right to a preferred design for living and to a different notion of star quality.

JON WYNNE-TYSON.  
Paddocks, Fontwell, Arundel, West Sussex.

## Tito's Biography

Sir, — I welcome the review by Stephen Clissold (July 16) of my *New Contributions to a Biography of Josip Broz Tito*. It is a useful contribution in itself to discussion on the making of

this biography, which is continuing. I have refrained from responding to any reviews or criticism — except the clearly malicious or defamatory — because it seems to me imperative to encourage as many contributions as possible. I hope, however, in my fifth volume to be able to take up many of the points raised by reviewers and critics, and offer some responses.

This democratic method of writing seems to me consistent with Tito's own view of what was necessary. "You will agree with me," he wrote to me on September 1, 1952, "that interpretation of specific events in your book cannot be accepted as definitive — and for a very simple reason, that final opinions can only be given from a longer distance." In my first edition in 1953 I entirely accepted this view, and when I came to complete his life in the current, much more substantial edition it still governed my thinking. Volume I contains an appeal to all readers to send their remarks, responses and criticism, as these form the main vehicle for keeping open the process of writing biography. I should add that it has also greatly increased the quantity of documentation available. It must be a central principle of critical historical scholarship that the first duty of the biographer is to establish sources, and then only on this basis to offer conclusions, if necessary tentatively.

In this spirit I accept the dictum of my colleague Professor Rudolf Ruzman of Ljubljana, that "the historian has to doubt everything, including his own truth". Tito's own view was consistent with this. When his *Collected Works* were published in 1977, he observed: "It is not my duty to give an evaluation of my texts. When the time comes, history and historical science will give their verdict." In the following year (May 8) his message on my new edition emphasised the need to correct everything that was not precise in the first edition.

The key problem in the writing of biography is the ethics of the historian. The pompous and the dogmatic may convince themselves that they have arrived at the Truth, but serious, independent writers find that destination consistently elusive, and even to commence the journey requires the assistance and support of

everyone available. May I appeal to your readers who may have documents or letters relevant to the life and times of Tito to send me copies for possible use in the remaining volumes of my biography? Your headline describing me as a Balkan Boswell is too flattering: I would be extremely happy to make a biography a fraction as beautiful as his of Dr Johnson. But I do recall that Boswell was obliged, he said, to run half over London, in order to fix a date correctly. Nearly two centuries later I freely admit to much running over the past thirty years, and should welcome the assistance of your readers in reducing the mileage.

VLADIMIR DEDJER.

Sipar 3, 52395 Savudrija, Istra, Yugoslavia.

## Virgil

Sir, — Robert Wells (October 1) makes a very fair commentary on the "Virgil" — the 2000th anniversary — exhibition now on display in the British Library. However he is in error in describing the two Virgil Writing Exercises of the first century AD as "a schoolboy's writing exercise". Writing exercises they certainly are, but the hands of the Oxyrhynchus Virgil and Hawara Papyrus 24 are both far too practised to be the work of schoolboys. As has been shown in the discussion of the graphics of these two pieces (*Scriptura e Civiltas* 3, 1979, 55-75), they are the practice pieces of an adult professional scribe.

Their purpose is akin to the typists' exercise, "The quick, brown fox jumps over the lazy dog", designed to exercise the scribe in every letter of the alphabet. To the history of the text they add nothing, save to show that Aeneid II 602 and XI 371-2 were sufficiently familiar in Egypt in the middle of the first century AD to be used for this humble purpose. But their real importance is that they with the Qasr Ibrim *Gallus* (*Journal of Roman Studies* 69, 1979, 125-55) are the earliest examples of the Roman *Classical Capital* script written with pen and ink.

WALTER COCKLE.

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## Among this week's contributors

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GEOFFREY BEST's most recent book is *War and Society in Revolutionary Europe, 1770-1870*, 1982.

ROBERT BRAIN's most recent book is *Rites Black and White*, 1979.

ILIA BRIGGS's *Night Visitors: The Rise and Fall of the English Ghost Story* was published in 1979.

BRIAN BROWN's books include *Beardley and his World*, 1976.

CHRISTOPHER BROWN is a Deputy Keeper at the National Gallery. His *Caravaggio* appeared last year and his study of Van Dyck will be published shortly.

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MATTHEW HOPKINS's books include *James Joyce's Dubliners*, 1979.

EDWARD N. LUTTWAK's most recent book is *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire from the First Century A.D. to the Third*, 1977.

F. S. L. LYONS's books include *Culture and Anarchy in Ireland 1890-1939*, 1979.

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## George Grosz

Sir, — Your correspondent

Loell (October 1) is quite right. His review of my not to have compared the two English translations of Grosz's autobiography with one another and with the available German version. I am particularly glad that your correspondent has set the record straight because the date she gives for the earlier translation — 1946 — shows that much of the autobiography was existence well before the 1930s. A good deal of it seems to have been written in the early years of the Second World War. Fortunately the Hogarth Library of Harvard University has recently acquired a considerable number of letters from Grosz's estate, my colleague Dr Kay Flavell, who has examined these and other relevant papers, assures me that this publication in full will throw much needed light on the nature and composition of the autobiography and on the state of mind in which it was drafted.

S. S. PRAYER.

The Queen's College, Oxford.

## TLS Crossword

In our judgment the two best submissions for the literary crossword prize were by Barbara Simon, 36 Mill Street, Interlachen, Peebles, Shetland G85, and Robert Burnard, Ishjarnveit 18, 9020 Tromsø, Norway. They will each receive a copy of one year's subscription to the TLS. In a large entry many puzzles failed to meet all the requirements laid down in the rules, or were too easy, and the judges felt unable to award a prize. The first of the winning competitions will be printed on the back page of next week's TLS — and further crosswords will follow a monthly intervals.

We regret that in Ian Duffield's review (September 17) of *The Colonial Office and the Development Policy* by J. Lee and Martin Pether, the sentence of the fourth paragraph was incorrectly printed with the word "dramatic neglect" in place of "dramatic contrast with earlier neglect".

## The coming of the car

T. C. Barker

JEAN-PIERRE BARDOU, JEAN-JACQUES CHANARON, PATRICK FRIDENSON and JAMES M. LAUX

*The Automobile Revolution: The Impact of an Industry*  
351pp, University of North Carolina Press, £14.  
08078 14962

Motor transport must be as unattractive to most historians as it is to the general public, for few of them write about this now very important subject. How different from railways, but understandably so. The noisy, oily, and dangerous motor-car lacks the romance and fascination of the steam locomotive. The Rainhill Trials and the early trains attracted visitors from afar who marvelled and rejoiced at what they saw. What a contrast with the early motor cars, those outward signs of privilege, making a terrible clatter, giving off malodorous smells, dropping oil everywhere — not to mention leaving great clouds of dust in their wake — which caused people to jump for safety and run for shelter. They frightened the horses too, and caused dreadful accidents. And, as the penultimate chapter of *The Automobile Revolution* spells out, they are still under fire. They still pollute the environment, consume in increasing quantity irreplaceable resources, maim and kill and are totally unsuited to be a form of transit in the congested city centres of a growingly urbanized world. In their largest commercial form the juggernauts are far too big for most inter-city roads. Yet the extent to which we can and have come to depend on them is now very considerable, and in Britain this has been emphasized during the recent railway strikes. Even the reluctant historians are receiving the message and are beginning to step into the twentieth century.

There is, of course, already a huge and diffuse general literature about motor vehicles, mainly technical and anecdotal. Journals abound. But very few people have so far tried to pull this mass of scattered and unrelated material together in an attempt to digest and explain how, and at what price, we have moved from the notoriously unreliable 10-20 mph horseless carriage of the 1890s owned by a tiny minority (there were perhaps only about 5,000 motorists in Britain, for instance, in 1900) to the sophisticated and on the whole remarkably reliable 70+ mph saloons of today. We certainly cannot discover many answers from the glossy coffee-table books full of magnificent photographs of racing Panhards and Napier (forwards by Stirling Moss) any more than we can learn the history of watchmaking or pewter from collectors' books about old timepieces or tankards.

Harold Perkins's *The Age of the Automobile* (1976), which grew out of a television series, started to point the way ahead, as did Kenneth Richardson's *The British Motor Industry, 1896-1939* (1977). In America John B. Rae's *The American Automobile* (1965) had already performed the same service. The business histories which deal with particular motor vehicle manufacturers help us a little more, for they at least discuss (or should do) falling prices, increasing reliability and the pace at which the new form of transport was spreading. The best introduction to the British part of the story may be found in books like P. W. S. Andrews and Elizabeth Brunner's *Life of Lord Nuffield* (1955) or R. J. C. Carver's *Nuffield* (1976). Roy many years, the most remarkable of all, for it was originally written as a Cambridge thesis as long ago as the end of the 1940s. Ian Lloyd's three-volume *Roly Royce* (1976).

It is significant that the two writers who contribute the historical sections in *The Automobile Revolution* are authors of books on motor manufacture. James M. Laux has written about the French motor car before 1914 in *The First Gear* (1976) and Patrick Fridenson, who

historian of Renault (*Histoire des Usines Renault, Naissance de la Grande Entreprise, 1898-1939*, 1972). Jean-Jacques Chanaron, an economist, deals with the years from 1945, apart from a chapter on labour relations which has been written by Jean-Pierre Bardou, who is described as a labour sociologist. The book was first published in French by Albin Michel, Paris, in 1977 but the opportunity has been taken in this English translation to revise it and bring it down to 1980. The four authors — and especially Professor Laux who seems to be the anchor man (he is described on the dust-jacket as translator and editor and his name alone appears on the spine) — have produced a work of some importance, for they have for the first time looked at the history of motor-car production internationally, not only to chronicle the emergence of the motor industry in various countries but also to discuss the development of particular businesses, the chief of which quickly became powerful multinationals. Here is a book which deserves to be read both by those who are keen on motor vehicles and by others who study the motor industry's role in economic development. As Professor Fridenson remarks in his brief conclusion, "it became a symbol and motive force for capitalist economic growth — and communism, too, in recent years".

The text leans heavily on statistics: it would have been easier to read if more of these could have been given in the form of tables. The broad picture, however, emerges clearly enough: Europe, struggling, small-scale growth in the early years of the present century when the industry in the United States, benefiting from a more favourable domestic market, leapt ahead, developing mass production just before 1914 and, not having to interrupt production during that country's very short war, emerged from it in a more commanding position than ever before or since. American producers had made only 200,000 cars in 1911, but thanks largely to the immensely successful Model "T" Ford they turned out 1.5m in 1916, 1.9m in 1920 and 3.6m in 1923. Then the European companies, in a number of which the American giants shrewdly invested, began to grow faster and, taking advantage of rising middle-class incomes, followed the Americans into large-scale production. British output (235,000 in 1929 and 507,000 in 1937) went ahead of the French, and then Germany began to catch up. Italy, which produced only 78,000 vehicles in 1937, was still far behind, but the Soviet Union (97,000 vehicles in 1935 and 211,000 in 1938) was, with American help, performing much better. We are told here that Japan reached 57,000 vehicles in 1939; but most of these were buses and trucks, a better year than 1939) the country still made fewer than 2,000 cars and under 9,000 "small-sized vehicles", together with 11,000 three-wheelers.

The real Age of the Automobile, if we make a possible exception of America, came after 1945 when richer populations were able to buy more cars and to drive along greatly improved (and often specially built) roads. World output of cars, a mere 3m in 1946, grew to 10m in 1955, 20m in 1968 and 30m in 1972. Then came the first oil crisis which slowed the growth rate. By 1979, however, if commercial vehicles are also taken into account, world production of motor vehicles had reached 43m. This was the time, of course, and especially since 1960, when Japanese motor cars made their spectacular entry into world markets and even caught the great American giants unware. Japanese car production, still only 165,000 in 1960, rose to nearly 4.5m in 1973. There had been nothing like this since America's pioneer performance half a century before. Further expansion after 1973 has been more difficult. The British and Italian industries got into difficulties but new national records were achieved by the United States in 1978, France and Germany (1979) and Japan (1980).

From the welter of facts and figures in the book various points emerge which deserve more general attention. There is, for instance, the curious case

of Germany which — so everyone suggests — hardly ever put an industrial foot wrong before 1914, was quite in the lead in all new industries (how often are we reminded about synthetic dyestuffs?) and had become a real rival to Britain and more than a match for France. But what happened in the vital motor industry? Sure enough, the Germans led the world in developing the stationary gas engine. Otto and the Deutz works became internationally famous. Both Gottlieb Daimler, who had reorganized Deutz before setting up on his own account, and Karl Benz contrived to produce a lighter gas engine fed by petrol vapour and had put it on wheels. But the Germans then lost the initiative. Their inventions were exploited under licence by the French who proceeded to build up the new industry. It took Germany more than thirty years to catch up again. In 1907 the Daimler company at Stuttgart were still making fewer than 500 cars, the most famous of which were Mercedes. The whole German motor industry in that year produced a mere 7,000 vehicles, only one-fifth of the French output. "What held them back?" Laux rightly asks; but he offers us disappointingly superficial and unconvincing answers: "Probably social conservatism, an attitude noted by many observers and often taking the form of a nostalgia for a rural, preindustrial past, incited perhaps by the traumatic problems springing from the extremely rapid industrialisation of Wilhelmian Germany."

His explanation of Britain's slow start in the new industry is a little more illuminating. The pernicious effects of the so-called Red Flag Act are very properly played down. A number of motor vehicles were already running illegally in Britain before November 1896, and the French industry was in any case still very small and vulnerable. British manufacturers could have begun production competitively in 1896-97 without too much difficulty, for the demand for cars then far outstripped the very small Continental (mainly French) capacity to meet it. Laux draws attention to the discouraging effects of Harry J. Lawson's buying up of the UK rights to the main motor patents and his speculative ventures to exploit them;

there is evidently much more to be discovered about these financial manoeuvres. He also suggests that the long engineering stoppage in 1897-98 should be taken into account.

There is another matter, not mentioned here, which is of considerable importance too, especially as it draws attention to a basic weakness in the book. Britain was the world's leading producer of pedal cycles and in 1895-96 the cycle industry was enjoying an unprecedented boom. This highly profitable new industry became the primary preoccupation of many business men who might otherwise have been venturing into motor vehicles (in all countries there was a close connection between cycles and motor vehicles, eg Peugeot, Adler, Pope). When the boom burst and they sought an alternative market, it was turned to motor cycles that the British turned. In any case, in the early days the definition of a motor car was often imprecise and can mislead us. Many of them were mounted on light cycle frames and were sometimes in fact motor tricycles. By concentrating on motor cars, however, the authors fail to see the important rôle in passenger transport, and sometimes in light commercial work, played by the motor cycle (sometimes with sidecar attached). Nor do they usually take account of the heavier end of motor transport (buses and lorries), though these sometimes creep into their motor vehicle totals.

But is the automobile revolution primarily concerned with production at all? Should it not rather be concerned with the statistics of registration? Motor vehicle manufacture, it is true, helped to generate wealth and created employment for many thousands of people in motor works and in many other branches of industry which supplied the "white" world with components. (Motor vehicles, for instance, have enormously expanded the market for flat glass.) But the revolution is surely also concerned with the vehicles on the road, the garages that kept them there and supplied them with petrol, and, above all, with the vast changes that these vehicles have brought about in most people's lives, whether or not they

owned a motor car, and especially if they lived in the country. Here again it becomes obvious that one cannot leave out of account the motor cycle or the motor bus; or even the unloved lorry or van, for they were quite as important, for instance, in supplying the supermarkets as the motor car has increasingly become for carrying away purchases.

Because all these vehicles could be lethal — and a promising source of taxation — most countries were not slow to have them licensed. Some of these registration totals shed more true light on the Automobile Revolution than do the production figures. Already by the end of 1905, for instance, there were over 27,000 motor cycles on the roads of the United Kingdom and more than 24,000 other motor vehicles of various sorts. By 1914 there were 124,000 motor cycles, 132,000 motor cars, 51,000 buses and taxis and 82,000 commercial vehicles. At the end of 1923, when US motor manufacture dominated international production, of 15,760,000 motor cars in the whole world, nearly 13,500,000 were running on America's roads. The UK had 469,000, France 352,000 and Germany only 100,000. There were then also just over a million motor cycles in the world; 430,000 of them ran on Britain's roads and only 171,500 on the roads of the United States, 56,000 in France and 39,000 in Germany. By 1938 Germany had become the great motor cycle country: it had 1.3m in use, and nearly 1.5m cars (of Britain's 462,000 motor cycles and 1.7m cars.) More of the British were able to afford greater comfort. So were more of the Americans, with 25 1/2m cars (and only 100,000 motor cycles). There were then already 34 1/2m motor cars in the world and 45 1/2m motor vehicles, well on the way to the present 400 million or so, an astonishing total when it is borne in mind that the whole population of the world is of the order of 4,600m and that the inhabitants of many parts of it are too poor to afford motor vehicles of their own, though they often benefit from the bus and the lorry. This, surely, is the Automobile Revolution. It will take many historians many years to investigate it fully. To some extent the present work does not really come to grips with its subject — but it is a useful, and indeed valuable, start.

## From pit to parliament

James Hunter

GORDON M. WILSON  
Alexander McDonald: Leader of the Miners  
250pp, Aberdeen University Press, £14.  
0 08 02845 8

On the evening of February 3, 1874, there was announced the result of that day's general election poll in Stafford

thorough. Returned as MP for the town's two Members of Parliament was Liberal candidate Alexander McDonald, Scotsman, President of the Miners National Association and Chairman of the TUC Parliamentary Committee. The result was both surprising and significant. Not only was McDonald an aggressively controversial proponent of working-class causes, he had himself sprung from that class, having begun his career as a faceworker in the Lanarkshire coal mines.

Something of his social origins was still apparent in McDonald's parliamentary career. Political satirists were particularly delighted by his West of Scotland accent and his habit of punctuating his Commons speeches by sitting on the chamber floor. But for all his lack of grace, McDonald was the uncouth agitator of his opponents' imaginations. The former miner had also obtained a university education. He had been a teacher. He wrote well and spoke impressively. And he was able to celebrate his election to parliament by purchasing a substantial mansion house in Scotland because he combined his by no means ineffective leadership of Britain's miners with a highly successful career as an investor

It is this complex character whom Gordon Wilson has set out to rescue from the historical oblivion to which he was long ago consigned. Wilson contrasts that oblivion with the fame still surrounding the name of McDonald's Lanarkshire contemporary David Livingstone and implies that their different treatment is to be explained by the fact that one was an Establishment-orientated imperialist, the other a frequently mocked campaigner for the rights of working people.

But that is not the sole reason. McDonald's life was not of the kind calculated to appeal to the generally leftward-leaning historians of the labour movement. The Stafford MP's career, as Wilson comments, was "almost a parable of Victorian thrift, diligence and self-help". He financed his entry to Glasgow University in his twenties by working extra long hours in especially dangerous conditions underground. And, having thus escaped from the mines, he became first a respectable teacher, then an even more respectable businessman.

His financial interests in mining were to bring charges of hypocrisy and, despite, not all of them unfounded, of Scotland's coal and his habit of punctuating his Commons speeches by sitting on the chamber floor. But for all his lack of grace, McDonald was the uncouth agitator of his opponents' imaginations. The former miner had also obtained a university education. He had been a teacher. He wrote well and spoke impressively. And he was able to celebrate his election to parliament by purchasing a substantial mansion house in Scotland because he combined his by no means ineffective leadership of Britain's miners with a highly successful career as an investor

most powerful British trade unionist of his lifetime and perhaps of the whole nineteenth century" writes McDonald's biographer. That is a very large claim. But Alexander McDonald — who, in words carved on his gravestone in a Lanarkshire churchyard, "spent his life fighting to improve the conditions of the miners" — most certainly merited a more substantial historical monument than the footnotes to which he has been customarily relegated. This is what Gordon Wilson has now produced.

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# The matter-of-fact omelette eater

M. F. Burnyeat

ROBERT NOZICK

Philosophical Explanations  
746pp. Oxford University Press. £15.  
019 8246722

Inside this huge, sprawling, self-indulgent volume there is one chapter, just over 100 pages, which really is what the whole aspires to be: a major work of twentieth-century philosophy. The Chapter (to give it a capital of respect) has a strong, startling conclusion: I can know that I am eating an omelette even if I don't know that I am awake and not dreaming, even if I don't know that I am not just a brain floating in a vat, wired up by cunning scientists to receive omelette sensations in place of real eggs. It sounds like the outrageous claim that I can know that I am eating an omelette even if, for all I know, I'm not. But it isn't. It is an immensely subtle critique of the idea, which has dominated epistemology since Descartes, that our knowledge of ordinary matters of fact is put in jeopardy by those sceptical arguments which urge that, for all we know, we may be dreaming or floating, without hand or mouth, in the scientists' vat. The claim is that I don't know that I'm not dreaming, but that the sceptic and his opponent have been wrong to think I need to know it if I am to know that I am eating an omelette.

If only one could congratulate Robert Nozick on his achievement and proceed at once to discuss the Chapter as the brilliantly conceived and tightly argued masterpiece it is. Unfortunately, we must reckon with the Book, *Philosophical Explanations*. For the Book presents the Chapter as something it most certainly is not. Nozick would like us to read his discussion of knowledge and scepticism as an example of a new and morally better way of doing philosophy, flanked in this missionary role by its companion chapters "The Identity of the Self", "Why Is There Something Rather Than Nothing?", "Free Will", "Foundations of Ethics", "Philosophy and the Meaning of Life". The 750 pages of the Book thus formed are to pioneer a new mode, of philosophizing, one which stays close to the motives which inspire people to take up philosophy. But the actual results of this project betray a flaw, a confusion, in the ambition from which it starts.

"The Identity of the Self" is a hard-working contribution to the literature on personal identity, advocating a radical theory which envisages not only that who I am can depend on what of the candidates available after some science fiction transformation is most like the old me, but also that the likeness is partially determined by my own conception of myself. In this sense I make my own self and the bizarre possibility looms that two of us might justifiably identify ourselves with the same predecessor. The argument is bold and clever, but there is nothing especially innovative in its methods. True, when Nozick leaves society to cope with the problem of overlapping persons by means of the lock-up or extermination (for whom?), one begins to feel that the theorist is the one in need of control. But it is the next chapter, "Why Is There Something Rather Than Nothing?", which reveals that a large part of the naive mode of philosophizing is just its lack of restraint. By the time one has struggled through this wild and woolly attempt to find a category beyond existence and non-existence, and marvelled at such things as the graph showing "the amount of Nothingness Force it takes to nothing some more of the Nothingness Force being exerted", one is ready to turn logical positivist on the spot.

Worse is to come. The remaining three chapters form a section entitled "Value" which constitutes over half the Book, some 350 pages and a complete disaster: rapid, tedious, embarrassingly pretentious. It is a long time since a professional philosopher undertook to say so much, and succeeded in saying so little. One central claim is that value is organic unity. On this basis we are to be shown *inter alia* why "it is better and lovelier to be moral" (crumbs!). But of course

we aren't, and couldn't be. The notion of organic unity remains in Nozick's hands what it always was, a vagueness far too insubstantial and effete to carry such moralizing. And the moralizing goes on and on, an interminable swamp of Nothingness, with only the occasional sparkle (for example, an intriguing Gricean analysis of retributive punishment as an act of communication) to remind us that Nozick is a very clever philosopher indeed.

Listen now to the opening paragraph of *Philosophical Explanations*: "I, too, seek an unreadable book: urgent thoughts to grapple with in agitation and excitement, revelations to be transformed by or to transform, a book incapable of being read straight through, a book, even, to bring reading to stop. I have not found that book, or attempted it. Still, I wrote and thought in awareness of it, in the hope this book would bask in its light. That hope would be arrogant if it weren't self-fulfilling — to face towards the light, even from a great distance, is to be warmed. (Is it sufficient, though, when light is absent, to face in the direction it would emanate from?)"

That paragraph tells all: the first word, the nervously jockey preterites at the end, the cloudiness of the thought in between, and above all, the hope that the ambition to write a great work of philosophy will be self-fulfilling. The sadness of it is that a cheap paperback of the Chapter by itself would be a sure passport to the bookshelves of every student of philosophy.

Nozick, however, has his own picture of what he is about in both Book and Chapter. He develops a contrast between coercive and noncoercive philosophy. Coercive philosophy is full of arguments and proofs (Nozick does not bother with the elementary distinction between these two things), and argument is coercive because if your reader believes the premises he has to believe the conclusion — he is forced to believe something he may not have wanted to believe. Which is "not a nice way to behave toward someone" (alas, poor Euclid!). In place of proof as the goal of philosophy Nozick proposes to substitute explanation. He won't prove that I do know I am eating an omelette; he will explain how it is possible for me to do so in the face of the facts to which the sceptic draws our attention. Similarly, he will try to explain how free will or objective values are possible in the face of the difficulties which appear to threaten them. Explanation is nicer, morally better, and answers to the original motivation for studying philosophy, which Nozick describes (in a desperately coercive contrast) as "a desire to understand, not a desire to produce uniformity of belief".

But hasn't a good deal of past philosophy been directed at exactly the sort of explanation that Nozick is seeking? Of course it has and Nozick admits it. If we take him at his word, the only real novelty he proposes is to allow his explaining to be tentative and exploratory, to try out theories to see how they would explain something if they were true. The trouble is that this innocuous-sounding plea for liberty becomes, as the Book proceeds, a licence for unrestrained self-indulgence. Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world of philosophy, and all because the author of *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* sees in the discipline of proof, and truth nothing but the coerciveness of "thought-police".

There is more to be said about the hidden coerciveness of this vision (explanation vs proof = Nozick vs Stalin), but the distinction between philosophy that explains and philosophy that proves was originally devised, we are told, to fit the way Nozick found himself proceeding with the topic of scepticism. So let us turn, with relief, to the Chapter to see whether any such simple dichotomy does justice to Nozick at his splendid and subtle best.

Nozick characterizes scepticism in terms of an argument and a conclusion. The conclusion is that we know little or nothing of what we think we know. The argument is that this conclusion follows

from the premise that we do not know we are not dreaming or bobbing in a vat. Nozick's aim is not to establish that the conclusion is false, that we do know as much as we think we know. It is to offer an account of knowledge which has the consequence that, although the premise is true, the conclusion does not follow from it. What is so impressive about the Chapter is the way in which, first, the account of knowledge is recommended on its own very considerable merits — a host of difficult cases which have wrecked previous analyses of the concept are accommodated with amazing ease — and then it emerges, as a stunning bonus, that the account really does have the consequence just mentioned. But our question was, how this strategy promotes explanation over proof.

On anyone's reading the Chapter is full of good, tough, old-fashioned argument, first for a particular analysis of knowledge, and then for the claim that the sceptic's conclusion does not follow from his premise. If the latter argument is not demonstrative proof, that is because inevitably the analysis of knowledge remains a hypothesis recommended by its explanatory power and by its capacity to deal with the recalcitrant counter-examples that will in due course (such is the ingenuity of philosophers) be brought against it. All the same, the Chapter comes as close to proof as interesting, substantive philosophy ever does: not indeed a proof that the sceptic's conclusion is false, but a proof that his argument for it is invalid.

What Nozick stresses, however, is that the argument will not convince the sceptic, whose own argument presupposes a different account of knowledge. That is, the Chapter is not designed to prove to the sceptic, in terms he will accept, that he is wrong. So what? Whether the argument does or does not constitute a proof of the invalidity of the sceptic's argument depends on whether Nozick's analysis of knowledge is correct, not on whether the sceptic believes it. The idiosyncrasies of a sceptic's mind have nothing to do with whether an argument should count as a proof or as an explanation. And for all the noise Nozick makes about the distinction, I cannot myself see why someone who believes that Nozick's analysis of knowledge is correct should not say that the chapter both proves that the sceptic's argument is invalid and thereby explains how I can know I am eating an omelette even if I don't know I am not dreaming.

This does not mean that Nozick is wrong to say he has not refuted scepticism. It means only that refuting scepticism is not the same as convincing a sceptic that he is refuted. The reasons why Nozick has not refuted scepticism are several. First, as Nozick himself emphasizes, he does not try to show that the sceptic's conclusion, "We know little or nothing of what we think we know" is false; he attacks only the argument for it. But second, scepticism need not express itself in a conclusion that doubts our claims to knowledge. From antiquity to the more common sceptical complaint has been that we have no good reason to believe the things we ordinarily accept as truths about the world — a more general and more challenging doubt. Finally, even with the discussion restricted to knowledge, Nozick attacks only one pattern of sceptical argument: a powerful and historically important pattern, to be sure, but neither history nor logic license Nozick's assertion that every argument for the conclusion that we know little or nothing of what we think we know will rely on a particular assumption which is false if Nozick's analysis of knowledge is correct.

The assumption in question brings us to the heart of the Chapter, where we do no longer get distracted by "new modes of philosophizing". If I knew that I was eating an omelette, and knew also that my eating an omelette implies that I am not just a brain in a vat, would I also know that I am not just a brain in a vat? According to Nozick, the sceptic has to assume that this answer is "Yes". For the sceptic wants to argue that I don't know that I'm not just a brain in a vat, and therefore I don't after all know I am eating an omelette. (Technically speaking, the argument works by contraposition on the principle that knowledge is closed under known logical implication.) But on Nozick's analysis of knowledge the assumption is false. So the sceptic's argument is invalid.

The reason why the assumption turns out false is that Nozick has argued that what has to be added to a true belief to make it knowledge is the belief that it is true. In the following way: 1) I would not have the belief if it were false (my cognitive state is sensitive to falsehood); 2) I would have the belief if it were true (my cognitive state is sensitive to truth). A large part of the Chapter is taken up with the elaboration and defence of this notion of a belief tracking the truth, which is an important contribution to philosophy. And it is condition 1) which shows that I don't and can't know I am not just a brain in a vat. For if I were, I would still believe I was not, the scientists having wired me up to have omelette experiences exactly like those I am now enjoying at the kitchen table. Hence the sceptic was mistaken when he said, "Yes, you would know you were not just a brain in a vat if only you knew you were eating an omelette". I wouldn't, and therefore I don't have to know it in order to know that I am in fact eating an omelette.

This is certainly an argumentative tour de force. How much does it show (prove, explain)? Less, I think, than Nozick imagines, because of his rather etiolated conception of what scepticism is: just the one bare argument from premise to conclusion. Nozick professes to take the sceptical challenge seriously, but he does not comment on the fact that any sceptic who propounds the argument we have been discussing must be prepared to assert that I do know that my eating an omelette implies that I am not just a brain in a vat. (Contraposition on the closure principle yields in the first instance a disjunction: either I don't know I am eating an omelette or I don't know that the implication holds.) The sceptic, as Nozick depicts him, has to be non-sceptical about logical knowledge in order to be sceptical about

our knowledge of empirical knowledge. Nozick does not inquire whether the half-heartedness is simply a temporary dialectical stratagem, to be followed on an onslaught on logical knowledge more than he inquires whether the sceptic might not come back at him with an alternative argument for the conclusion that we know little or nothing of what we think we know. I mention just one example, an argument claiming (as sceptics argue have often done) that the evidence of our senses is never put upon them would be making a straw assault on the possibility of satisfying the conditions for knowledge and would thereby escape Nozick's critique.

But the most serious deficiency of Nozick's conception of the sceptic challenge is that the only question raised for him is a question about knowledge. Historically, as I noted earlier, the sceptic's question has been "Do our beliefs bear any relation to what is at all?", not "Do they stand that very special relationship to the world which philosophers struggle to define when they talk about the makes a true belief into knowledge?" An affirmative answer to the second question implies, of course, a negative answer to the first. That is why one common response to scepticism is to try to prove that we have knowledge. But Nozick has tried to do this. He has not argued an affirmative answer to the second question. He has removed one obstacle to saying "Yes, we have knowledge". The entire repertoire of sceptical arguments for a negative answer to the first question remains unchecked. We may still doubt that we have any contact with the world at all.

From all this I do not conclude that Nozick has failed, but that he has succeeded in a smaller and philosophically more important way than the one he announced. The clarity with which he shows how the dream argument can be shown to be false, and how little it is achieved, but lovers of argumentative philosophy will recognize in this his major advance.

## My Experiences and I

Kathleen Lennon

HYWEL D. LEWIS

The Kluge Self

202pp. Macmillan. £12.

0 333 29106 9

For H. D. Lewis each individual self is a unique and ultimate reality, distinct from all other selves, although we can never express in what way distinct. However, each individual knows himself to be the individual, and just what this is like. The self is an entity over and above its states and experiences (and independent of the body) but the relation between the self and its experiences is very close, for it is only in the having of experience that the self exists. Should there be times (eg. of deep and dreamless sleep) when we are not experiencing then for those times we cease to exist. The self is a continuing entity, and identical subject for a range of experience. We cannot say what constitutes this identity. It is simply a brute fact, revealed via memories when we are aware of the same self in past experience, as present ones.

Professor Lewis contrasts this position with various recent alternatives, many of which he criticizes for attempting to give some account of that in which our identity consists. These he regards as mistaken attempts to state the unstable. They lead to paradoxes of the kind he finds in the writings, eg. of Derek Parfit, where the proffered conditions fail to yield determinate answers to questions of personal identity in the case of split

brains. Lewis's approach to the so-called problem cases is unimpeachable. The self cannot divide, for necessarily one subject can integrate all the experiences of which it is subject. Whether some one of the divided persons with half my brain is identical to me is a question of fact, depending on whether their experiences are experiences of the same pure self. If they are not then my past memories of my experiences will be misremembrances, for genuine memories would be of me experiencing and thus require identity.

There is something unsatisfactory about this approach. Lewis recognizes that there must be something which distinguishes the case where person A is identical to person B from cases where they are distinct. He regards this something as indescribable. Now the less we are all aware of our past selves, and the less we are aware of the existence of a unique and undivided pure ego.

In the problem cases, however, in which both of two distinct persons appear to be aware of the past as experienced by some one person, Lewis holds that their own experiences must be identical. This seems to show that whatever subjective awareness gives us access to the existence of an unchanging ego, which our identity resides in, more can be said, we may be tempted to suspect that the pure self may be elusive, but non-existent. The assurance concerning my own identity is simply the revelation of the fact that I am what I am.

## At the expense of Spain

C. H. Wilson

JONATHAN I. ISRAEL

The Dutch Republic and the Hispanic World 1602-1661

478pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

£22.50.

0 19 826534 4

Some historians specialize in the rise of empires; others in their decline. Jonathan Israel does both. His study deals with the period 1606-61, which was equally decisive for the rise of the Dutch Republic and the decline of the Spanish Empire. At the heart of his thesis is his conviction that the latter can be adequately explained in terms of the former. He reaches this conclusion within a larger philosophy of history. The analysis of political events in the light of economic trends and vice versa ("this particular neglected path") offers us what is in fact the best prospect of progressing towards a more meaningful kind of history.

Dr Israel applies this method of viewing history to the long, second part of the struggle of the Eighty Years War, punctuated as it was by a sequence of attempts at peace from 1606 to 1650, and the final emergence of what he calls the "new Dutch-Spanish relationship" from 1648-61. Why, in spite of Spanish abandonment of all hope of reconquering the North, did the obstinate struggle continue? Dr Israel has no doubt of its status as "one of the most formative influences on the political and diplomatic history of all Europe during four decades."

No one will doubt that his achievement is of remarkable quality. His range and mastery of primary sources, in Spanish, Dutch, French, German, Italian and English alone establishes his claim to be an international historian of a high order. He is equally at home in his two main centres of research — Spain and the Netherlands — and his command of the literature covering their major economic and political problems is impressive. A series of maps and statistical tables is witness to his continued fidelity to his ideal of

combined historical analysis rather than the straight political narrative or purer economic analysis by which his problems and topics have often been covered by earlier writers.

The emergent text is nevertheless well-digested; it sometimes necessarily dense, it succeeds in avoiding obscurity and it is on the whole free of tiresome professional jargon. Both in its transitional argument and in its conclusions Israel's work will undoubtedly occupy henceforth an important place in the study of Spanish, Dutch and European history of its period.

What are his main conclusions? First, on both sides religion played an increasingly secondary role. Whatever it was, this was not a war of religion. It is less clear where its roots lay. On the Spanish side (Israel suggests), increasingly in maintaining the international balance of power that best suited Spanish needs, eg. sacrificing disputed interests to the Dutch in order to strengthen Spain against France. Class interests were split, in Spain as in the Netherlands, where the major problem was the growing imbalance of the economy and the continued growth of the wealth and power of Amsterdam at the expense of the manufacturing towns of the south.

By and large, the conflicting economic factors cut right across class and were chiefly determined by locality and whether the groups concerned were active in trade, industry, bureaucracy or the army. This is brave history. In its refusal to be content with simple generalization it reminds one (though in very different contexts) of the insistence of the Peterhouse historians on the primacy of factuality and all this is to be admired, though it does not make for easy comprehension. And here we must touch on what seems to be a weakness of the author's method of working. It emerges, for example, from his footnotes, which refer preponderantly to original sources. This means that his text and argument turn predominantly on his own subject — Dutch/Spanish relations. Surely, on the face of it, not unreasonable? True, but Israel seems never quite to make up his mind whether he is in fact dealing primarily with the limited issue

of the relationships between two powers, or whether that relationship was so all-powerful an influence on the destiny of both powers that other wider European relationships and movements can be, if not ignored, at least played down. More attention to some of the secondary sources mentioned in his bibliography might have diluted the original flavour of his research but it would have allowed more weight to those and other forces (eg. Anglo-Dutch and Anglo-Spanish relations) which also influenced the rise and decline of his two selected powers. The perhaps exaggerated reliance on primary sources may mean that his study will be used more for its mastery of detail than for the validity of its general conclusions.

This weakness emerges when Israel frames his grand conclusions, for example on the decline of Spain. This, in his view, must be interpreted as "the impact of the changing relationship with the Dutch on Spain's economy. It is this which 'provides us with insights which would otherwise be perplexing

features of Spanish economic life during the period of decline". Those other factors and forces which other historians have diagnosed as important can be dismissed: "The underlying weaknesses which historians have traditionally seen as being at the root of Spain's decline — the unfavourable balance of trade, uncompetitive industries, vulnerable agriculture and heavy taxation — are in themselves largely irrelevant to the timing of Spain's decline."

Strong words: it is refreshing to see baby and bathwater thrown out together, but does the analysis hold good? Even allowing that the historiography of the decline of Spain is replete with examples of runners — monetarist and moralist — jumping the gun, surely not. And for two reasons. First, the unfavourable balance of trade and uncompetitive industries of Spain were themselves a reflex of (*inter alia*) rising Dutch competition. That is to say, what Dr Israel regards as competing (but illusory) alternative explanations of

Spanish decline are in fact and in large measure identical with his own. Not opposed to them. But this is not all. It is surely impossible to eliminate from the argument the basically positive follies of Spanish government policy, above all the excessive levels of spending on military and naval adventures in pursuit of imperial ends, the bureaucratic muddle and the repression. Spanish critics began to draw attention to these long before Israel's period begins: they were still condemning them as strongly as ever (cf. Uzquizar) in the eighteenth century. High taxation was an undoubted factor in the decline of both of Dr Israel's antagonists: in both cases resources were over-stretched, though for very different reasons.

Here the historian treads in some of the deepest waters one European economic history: it will be a long time before their mysteries are charted. Every universal *nosstrum* remains open to doubt. Meanwhile Dr Israel is to be congratulated on a work of research as elegant as it is arduous.

## According to Augustine

Henry Kamen

A. D. WRIGHT

The Counter-Reformation: Catholic Europe and the Non-Christian World 1540pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson.

£18.50.

0 297 78011 5

Counter-Reformation scholars in the English-speaking world may be divided rather arbitrarily into two camps: traditionalists who, along the lines of Janelle's now rather outdated textbook, stress the institutional aspects and treat the movement as primarily a crusade undertaken by the Jesuits; and those who, inspired largely by G. Le Bras's pioneering work on religious sociology and by the brilliant syntheses of Jean Delumeau, emphasize changes at the popular level. A. D. Wright's ambitious book

has something in common with both camps, but in the end tends towards the traditional approach, as his all-embracing title suggests. His preference for the broad rather than the local perspective is a little bit surprising, since the original material in the book is drawn almost exclusively from his PhD thesis on the Counter-Reformation in Milan under the Borromeos. All the strengths in his study, it must be said, derive from his Milan evidence; all the weaknesses from the attempt to set the case of Milan into a wider and more traditional context. This is not to gainsay the boldness of his concepts and the imaginative way in which he attempts to weld the many aspects of the Counter-Reformation together.

Wright takes as his basic and central theme the Augustinian heritage of pre-Reformation Europe, a subject which has been developed by many in the past in order to show the common sources shared by Catholics and Protestants, but which he further develops in order to show that "the model of Saint Augustine was influential" in the reform of institutions, an interesting argument which, however, appears to be based in concrete terms on examples from Milan, where the model of Saint Ambrose very quickly superseded that of Saint Augustine. Branching out from the Augustinian theme, Wright explores the immense dimensions of the Counter-Reformation throughout the world. Here he shows his remarkable command of the subject: despite the vast field he covers, including both reform in Europe (a strikingly good chapter) and the missions overseas, there are no significant factual errors in the book. Every page, moreover, displays a wealth of erudition. These fine qualities must nevertheless be set against problems of presentation and method.

Wright's presentation is at times puzzling. The chapter on "Religion and Magic", for example, has almost nothing on magic, but deals instead with witch persecution (where Wright emphasizes that the phenomenon resulted from collective male persecution of females), nuns, marriage regulations, clerical immunity and Church finance. This variety of material makes it difficult to follow the argument. More important, because Wright does not specify to what extent Italian or Milanese developments differed from elsewhere, he seems to assume that there was a unity of method and purpose throughout the Counter-Reformation. The chapter headed "Scholarship and Science" likewise has almost nothing about either, unless one interprets the discussion of Galileo as being about science; instead, there are three pages on poor relief, even on the convocation of the council of Trent. A beginner would be very confused indeed by the author's style of narrative, which involves ranging far and wide in time and space, bringing in

facts by allusion rather than direct references; this is certainly no book for the reader who does not already have a fairly full grasp of the subject. The chapter on "Political Similarities" provides, at random, a sample of Wright's style. Within one paragraph and the space of twenty lines, he manages to bring in Queen Elizabeth as Astraea, Le Bret as an absolutist, Charles I commissioning Rubens to do the ceiling of the Banqueting House, the House of Orange, the Synod of Dort, Sabbatai Zevi and Richelieu's *Political Testament*. Though full of admiration at this breadth of reading, a reader may be unable to extract clear meaning out of the rich mixture.

Which superb work has recently been done, in published books no less than unpublished theses, on the local impact of the Counter-Reformation. These studies have brought us closer to understanding the specific impact of the reform on the religious life of allegedly Catholic communities. Wright, by contrast, removes his gaze deliberately from the local and fixes it on the global, viewing the Counter-Reformation as a universal event covering nearly three centuries. He is reverting to the traditional picture, and it is here that his method must be questioned. It is simply not satisfactory to combine the evidence from Milan with examples from England and France, and assume that one has thereby identified a uniform movement. Space forbids extracting examples from the book where the hasty generalization applied to a whole continent seems to ignore the very real regional variations in the Counter-Reformation. It is significant, notably difficult subject, becomes convincing only because the greater part of it is about Italy and Borromeo.

In sum, this is a vigorously stated, high account, founded on extensive reading. It is, however, concerned more with the manifestations — politics, institutions, art — of the Counter-Reformation than with its internal characteristics. The book gives no satisfactory impression of the religious aspects of the Counter-Reformation: its effect on popular consciousness (the sort of theme, for example, discussed by Peter Burke as "the triumph of Lent"), on religious practices (liturgy, carnavals), on belief (the universalization of piety, as discussed in William Christian's recent *Local Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain*). It is a good book, but more traditional than it need have been. Wright shows in his bibliography that he is perfectly well acquainted with the direction of recent research. In his concluding chapter he justifies his choice of a global perspective (literally global, in the section on "Expansion" he ranges from Poland to Malabar and Manila), but I suspect that, so broad a canvas hides major contradictions which should be exposed if we are to understand the Counter-Reformation from within.

## By raid and by trade

C. R. Boxer

A. C. DE C. M. SAUNDERS

A Social History of Black Slaves and Freedmen in Portugal 1441-1555

283pp. Cambridge University Press.

£27.50.

0 521 23150 7

This book began life as an academic thesis, but it is none the less readable for that. The author has made good use of published Portuguese work on his field, but his book is chiefly shaped by his consultation of a large mass of documentary material in Portuguese provincial archives, as well as in those of Lisbon. The result does not contain any major surprises for readers familiar with the works of A. H. de Oliveira Marques and V. Magalhães Godinho, but A. C. De C. M. Saunders has treated the subject in much greater depth than either of them had occasion to.

Black slaves were present in the Iberian peninsula during the centuries of Moorish domination, but the author begins with the year 1441, when the first of many blacks to be brought by ship directly to Portugal from West Africa were seized in a raid on the Mauritanian coast. A flourishing slave-trade quickly developed, and by 1466 had reached the point where a Portuguese prince, assured a visiting Czech knight, Leo of Rozmital, that his countrymen enslaved annually "a hundred thousand or more" of Ethiopians of both sexes, who are sold here like cattle. This number was a wild exaggeration. The actual annual imports were probably some three or four thousand; although we have only

"guesstimates" for most of this period, since many of the relevant records were destroyed in the great Lisbon earthquake and fire in 1755. In any event, it is clear that the number of slaves acquired in West Africa, originally by raiding, but thereafter by trading, steadily increased between 1441 and 1555.

Portugal was the first European country to have a considerable black population, which by the mid-sixteenth century probably numbered some 35,000 (32,370 freedmen, 2,580 slaves), roughly 2.5 to 3 per cent of the national total. Slaves were seldom the only source of labour, but they supplemented the work-force of hired hands and indentured labour in industry and in agriculture. They were also prominent as domestic servants, whether of the rich, who liked to have an entourage of black slaves as evidence of status, or as a single slave such as the one described by a visiting English Capuchin friar at Lisbon in 1633 as being the sole support of a poor widow. The same friar also noted how the slaves were allowed to form religious processions on the feast day of Our Lady of the Snows (August 5), decked out in their tribal finery, or in clothes loaned by their owners. Black wet-nurses seem to have been popular with the upper-classes, and this may have helped to ease racial tensions, although the author does not deal with this point. At the bottom of the social scale, there was inevitably a blurred distinction between black slaves, black freedmen, and the lowest class of whites, so that inter-marriage was not uncommon; but infant mortality was high, as it was nearly everywhere.

King Manuel passed a law that all slaves should be baptized as soon as possible after purchase or on reaching Portugal. Those blacks who were not

Muslims usually made no difficulties about exchanging African animism for Portuguese folk-Christianity. This did not require much spiritual effort. Jesuits working in the Northern province of Trás-os-Montes in the 1500s alleged that the local peasantry knew no more of their traditional faith than did recently baptized slaves from Guinea. However, a few free blacks became secular clergy, and a few others became lay-brothers in the Mendicant Orders.

Saunders gives an excellent survey of the mechanics of the slave-trade in its various developments before its spectacular growth in the second half of the sixteenth century. He also deals discreetly with the relatively few critics and doubters. These were concerned not so much with the validity of slavery, which was accepted by the Church, as with the abuses to which the slave-trade was subject. Most of these critics were Spaniards; but the most radical of all was a maverick Portuguese Dominican friar, Fernão de Oliveira. In a book on negroes, *Arte de Guerra no Negro*, which he published in 1555, he included a chapter, indignantly denouncing the slave-trade as being totally unjustified, legally, morally, and theologically. His spirited protest had no effect and was not even cited by other contemporary critics, such as Las Casas, Mercado, Albornoz and Sandoval.

A copious bibliography and numerous notes testify to the author's wide and deep reading. The six illustrations are carefully selected from sixteenth-century Portuguese sources. Four maps, nine informative statistical tables, and an admirable index buttress a most impressive and welcome contribution to the peculiar history of the "peculiar institution" during the Golden Age of Portugal.











## The cold-eyed terrors

Jim Crace

ELLEN GILCHRIST

In the Land of Dreamy Dreams  
167pp. Faber. £5.95.  
0 571 11965 4

Ellen Gilchrist's witty volume of "Short Fiction" in the *Land of Dreamy Dreams*, does its best to obscure its own considerable merits. With the connivance of its dust-jacket rhotomontage, the collection masquerades as a hunt and loving examination of New Orleans and the Mississippi delta. Gilchrist's title is taken (and slightly misquoted) from the refrain to that jerky Southern fox-trot, *Way Down Yonder in New Orleans* ("In the Land of Dreamy Scenes"). Her text - with almost Miltonic confidence in the authority of proper nouns - is obsessively signposted with street names and Louisiana landmarks, from the Huey P. Long Bridge and the Audubon Park to the graceful stucco mansions on Exposition Boulevard and the stately tenements of the St Thomas Street project.

Yet it is only the outward apparel (and, to some extent, the narrative) of these engaging moral tales which evokes the South. New Orleans presents itself in clear, painstaking detail, but the broad demotic idiosyncrasies which define any city are neglected. Indeed, those few tales which foray north for their settings, the campus of Seattle University ("Suicides") and the high-rise abortion clinics of Houston ("1957, a Romance") are barely distinguishable

in tone and demeanour from the majority set amongst the levees and bayous of the delta. But in the *Land of Dreamy Dreams* cannot be dismissed as little more than an anecdotal street plan. As the stories accumulate, Gilchrist's true obsession reveals itself. Municipal spirit of place is - despite the assertions of the blurb - a minor concern. The self-conscious parading of exact Southern locations is an entirely different territory is explored and mapped. Gilchrist's "Land of Dreamy Dreams" is Adolescence.

Her characters, for the most part, are children subjected to the arbitrary dislocations of family life, and the "cold-eyed, white-armed... terrors" of puberty. Teenage Margaret, isolated and overweight, in "Generous Pieces", discovers hidden condoms in the pockets of her father's gaberdrine topcoat: "How do I know what the rubbers are? How do I know with such absolute certainty that they are connected with Christina Carver's mother and the pall that has fallen over our house on Calvin Boulevard?" In "Traveler", LeLe Arnold, boastful and gauche, "the wildest girl (and the biggest liar) in the Mississippi delta, the plays little Southern Miss among the outside fur coats, negligees, kimonos and the wrinkle creams of her dead aunt's dressing room. And eight-year-old Rhoda (in "1944") perches at the bar, sipping pink Shirley Temple cocktails and revelling in the adult world of love and grief with a newly bereaved wartime bride. "I squirmed with delight beneath her approving gaze, enchanted by the dark timbre of her voice, the marvellous fuchsia of her lips and fingertips, the brooding glimmer of her widowhood." Together

they tap out the "Air Corps Hymn" on empty martini glasses.

These first-person narratives betray a sophisticated, writerly sensibility which at times goes beyond the years and understanding of the speaker. Another Rhoda, the ten-year-old chronicler of "Revenge" (this volume's masterpiece) describes, "a full moon... caught like a kite in the pecan trees across the river", and a waterside house which "shimmered in the moonlight like a jukebox alive in a meadow".

Occasionally, too, one detects in Gilchrist a loss of nerve with her fragile, modest plots, so that perfectly poised tales are laden (for ironic purposes, perhaps) with the ballast of a final prose sunset: "Then, like a woman in a dream, she walked on down the street, the rays of the setting sun making her path all the way to the bus stop at the corner of Annunciation and Nashville Avenue. Making her a path all the way... to a boy who was like no other. To the source of all water." And again: "Bebber walked on down the street, the rays of the setting sun making him a path all the way to her house, a little road to travel, a wide band of luminous and precarious order."

But if Gilchrist's narrative voices are sometimes less than authentic, and the writing is occasionally inappropriately earnest, the rewards elsewhere for the reader are a sustained display of delicately and rhythmically modulated prose and an unselfish dissection of raw sentiment. Her stories are perceptive, her manner is both stylish and idiomatic - a rare and potent combination.

## Hunter and hunted

Kevin Crossley-Holland

MARIE ELISE ROBERTSON

The Clearing  
182pp. Atheneum. \$11.95.  
0 689 11275 0

In the moonlight, a bobcat stalks a wounded deer. It can bide its time, for it will get the deer in the end; the bobcat knows it and the deer knows it. But what the bobcat does not know is that it is being tracked by a hunter. And what the hunter does not know is that he is being closely followed across the snowy wilderness by a woman, her gun raised...

Annie, battered in spirit and body, on the run from a disastrous marriage to Saul, has scooped up their four-year-old son Arie and made for the abandoned hunting cabin up north that used to belong to her father. There she intends to lie low through the harsh winter. She buys a cord of seasoned hardwood for twenty-eight dollars; the falling snows soon cover the tracks made by her truck; no one, not even Saul, will find them.

But the injuries we sustain travel with us, and Marie Elsie Robertson's novel is notable for its powerful evocation of emotional force. Annie's retreat with her son provides her only with immediate breathing space. She begins to delight in simple occupations, chopping wood, making oatmeal, and is nourished by her dependent and desperate love for her son:

"I love you," he told her.  
"I love you too, baby."  
She parted the fine hair on his head with her breath, touching him with her hands, the way wild animals lick foreign smells from the fur of their young.

But she cannot escape the sense of being watched, being followed, and she is prey to dark thoughts about her marriage.

After she discovers a sweatshirt and

sleeping bag in the attic of the cabin, and then stumbles on footprints in the snow, Annie's fear borders on hysteria. Saul? Even here? No, it's Jake, a hunter, who has suddenly waited until he is certain of his prey (I watched you, knew what you looked like, thought how it would be... always there, in the back of your mind...) and brazenly barges into the lives of Annie and Arie. Arie is glad of male company and Jake takes a liking to him - he fashions toys for him, teaches him how to hold a gun, Annie washes Jake's shirts, lies back at night, and is overcome with shame when he makes her desire him. She finds it almost unbearable that she should be forced over again to live her life with building Saul, she hates "seeing him stand with his back to the stove as though he had every right, as though it were all his, everything he touched", and she plans revenge.

Marie Elsie Robertson, author of one previous novel, *After Pres* (1980) and a much earlier collection of short stories, *Jordan's Stormy Banks* (1981), knows all about suspense. In simple, austere language and brief staccato chapters she slowly increases the tension within the snowbound cabin. One man, one woman, one child: only one of them will survive the harrowing winter and walk out of the woods.

*The Clearing* is an unhappy and unsettling novel. Its malcontents are the relationship of hunter and hunted, and the nature of revenge. There is no point at which Annie is not aware of either Jake or Saul or both, and no point at which she does not contemplate vengeance - vengeance against the tyranny of two men or, as it seems to Annie, every man.

One acknowledges Robertson's astute portrayal of domineering man and stricken woman, and winces at the innocence of childhood caught between them; one admires her crystalline and subtle descriptions of the snowbound north; at a pinch, one accepts the utter humoursomeness; but one can scarcely welcome such a embittered and obsessive little story.

## Hanging in there

Stephen Brook

DON ZACHARIA

The Match Trick  
236pp. Hutchinson. £7.95.  
0 09 149750 7

The recipe for the Standard American Novel (there are in fact a number of recipes with different regional flavourings; this one hails from the East Coast) is as follows. Take two or more Jewish professional couples; place in suburban Long Island; add precocious children; stir in adultery; throw in the names of expensive French wines; if mixture fails to rise add heavy dose of psychotherapy; sprinkle with kinky sex; decorate with poignancy and irony; pour in spicy blurb and your book is ready to serve.

Don Zacharia's *The Match Trick* has all these ingredients, plus a few that are optional, such as tedious reminiscences of teenage macho sporting triumphs. Such formulaic performances can be successful and persuasive, but Zacharia is slack, self-conscious and affable. Soon after it opens Noel Roth and his neighbour Phil and Phoebe are waiting up for Noel with Susan, who is unaccountably absent. It gradually emerges that she's having a one-night stand with a high-school hero who has just come back east after a decade in Ohio. The next day it's reported that she and her lover have been killed by a falling air-conditioner. (Death with blitzyweat comic overtones - just as the formula required). Noel has to cope with her death, their children, isolation and so forth. He responds weirdly, yet by the end of the novel (which is signalled by the absence of additional chapters) we gather that he has more or less pulled himself together.

Zacharia is not without invention or humour. There are moments of farce that are genuinely entertaining; Noel's children, and his friendship with Phil are convincingly depicted. Yet the novel's pretensions require us to take the action as serious as the protagonists do, and this is hard. Behind the wryness and sophistication lies that insistence on sensitivity that bedevils so much contemporary American fiction. Not much can be said about it, but by admitting it, he demands that we, the reader, be tolerant forgiveness: "guess you could say I have a problem, and all I can say is I for you to hang in there with me because I just can't always be this way. And I love you." Anything goes, it appears, as long as we recognize that deep down Noel is sensitive and caring.

The sex scenes are especially odd. After Susan's death, Noel secretly visits a "devastatingly beautiful" woman who makes a point of inflicting maximum sexual humiliation on him with the rest of the novel slides into, and, apparently, the author.

*Free Spirits: Annals of the Insurgent Imagination* 1 (edited by Paul Balle, Jayno Cortez, Philip Lamanita, Nancy Joyce Peters, Franklin Rosemont and Penelope Rosemont; 222pp; San Francisco: City Lights Books, \$7.95; 86287 128 7) is a collection of poems, stories and essays (many of which show the influence of Surrealism) interviews with internationalist as well as "free" poets, and a collection of contributions from E. P. Thompson, Jim O'Rourke, Philip Lamanita, Wilson Harris, Angela Carter, Ted Joang, Dennis Gaskooney and Lawrence Partridge ("An Artist's Disturbance"). There is an interview with film-director John Kaplan; Bill Cole contributes a piece on "Improvisation in Music"; Prending deities are Breton, Marx and Poe. The editors comment: "This could be called a 'journal of anthology in the sense meant by André Breton, when he called for the exaltation of it' rather than the depreciation of it."

## POLITICS

## High rise lowdown

J. N. Tarn

PATRICK DUNLEAVY

The Politics of Mass Housing in Britain, 1945-1975: A Study of Corporate Power and Professional Influence in the Welfare State  
447pp. Clarendon Press: Oxford  
University Press. £17.50.  
0 19 827426 2

Housing is an emotive subject today, a matter for mutual recrimination among all the interested parties and for general public criticism. Why? Some would say that because it has become subject to government policy, an issue which involves votes, it has long since ceased to be a matter for rational discussion. It could be argued that since 1945 politicians have manipulated the housing market for their own private political gain and that those to be housed were only ciphers in a gigantic game. Patrick Dunleavy would argue that mass housing was, after 1945, big business as well as politically significant. The bogey-men were the architects and system builders, the housing managers and the planners - in fact, the conflict has been one between the idealism of the welfare state and the reality of a capitalist society.

If the subject has aroused passion, the thoughtful literature on it is slim and this book is to be welcomed because it is a serious contribution to our understanding of housing policies over three important decades. But it is only a partial study since Dunleavy deals specifically with high-rise building and he argues a particular thesis concerning the distortion of policy by designers and the big construction groups. The role of government is not given the

prominence it deserves in an era when, for the first time perhaps, central government began to exert a significant influence on the nature of building more generally and not just on housing.

The author is a lecturer in Government at the LSE and his approach is that of the political scientist. The work began as a PhD thesis and it still has that tinge of over-intellectualization so characteristic of books made from theses. Its detailed statistical analyses are also fairly heavy going, although as a source of information the book is useful.

Its centrepiece is a series of three studies of housing policy in widely differing contexts: an inner London borough, Newham; a major provincial conurbation, Birmingham; and a large free-standing city, Bristol. It is merely coincidence that Newham produced the Roman point disaster and Birmingham the Maudslayi scandal; while Bristol, a city with a strong high-rise policy, can show some violent reversals of policy but no skeletons in the cupboard? The three studies make fascinating reading; of local political intrigue, duels between local politicians and government, battles between officers and members, the predatory role of the system builders. Taken together they illustrate all the frailty of human nature, and they have, in a political sense, the ring of truth about them. If all power corrupts, then those who exercise power over housing finance are certainly no exception. But many of the changes and U-turns recorded here were explicable, and the tensions are part of local democracy. What is alarming is not so much the potential for corruption but the evident lack of human concern in so many people who, in a welfare state, might be regarded as of the people.

But as one who has lived through this period I must add a caveat. Society as a

## Town Hall blues

Iain McLean

HOWARD ELCOCK and MICHAEL WHEATON

Local Government: Politicians, professionals and the public in local authorities  
330pp. Methuen. £11.95 (paperback, £5.95).  
0 416 85750 7

Flinders and Swann used to sing that "The English are Moral, the English are Good, / And Clever, and Modest, and Misunderstood." People who work in local government feel that they are all of these things, particularly the last. Disguised as a student text, this book is a plea for understanding local government from inside. The authors, academics who have also been local government councillors on Humberside, like another politician from Hull, they complain that local government is not all, or even very much, a matter of corruption and bumbledom. In fact it is all too easy a scapegoat for other people's inconsistency and failure to think out the consequences of their decisions and non-decisions. We all want healthy, autonomous, local democracy, but we also complain whenever we get poorer services than the citizens of the neighbouring council, even though autonomy must entail the right to give a lower standard of service. Central government sets local authorities new jobs to do, and then turn round and complains about the resulting bureaucracy at the Town Hall. Councils have no way of raising money except through rates, which are inefficient, inflexible and regressive. "Everybody thinks 'the council' should be disposed of - so long as they don't let it all the end of Everybody's garden."

The book is good at describing such situations, and when it attacks local authorities it does so on sound, albeit somewhat general, grounds. Some of the criticisms are of the 1970s for example, but the book is still relevant. It is a pity that the authors do not bring local government to life, which is a pity because the title is a pity. The authors are Howard Elcock and Michael Wheaton.

whole shared many of the aspirations here attributed to architects, planners and engineers - the design blame for the high-rise programme. The main blame must surely lie with the governments of both persuasions, who created a situation which traditional building techniques could not solve. Nor is it true to say that the whole design world invested in high-rise. There is an honourable record of low-rise housing in some of the towns which the author ignores, and a steady programme of influential research into urban form which lay in precisely the opposite direction. Certainly as early as 1956, Leslie Martin was beginning in Cambridge to develop the ideas which led to the important work of the Land Use and Built Form group. So long as this alternative philosophy is not forgotten, and some sense of historical perspective kept in mind, then one can set the thesis which Dunleavy develops into context.

The three case-studies are set against a lengthy introduction, which traces

the development of national housing policies, their interaction with the local situation, the growth and decline of high-rise housing in the context of changing financial policies, and all the complex social, economic, design and construction pressures that can be brought to bear nationally as well as locally. Dunleavy's approach is analytical: he first identifies the culprits and then goes on to assess the national factors in terms of political theory, concluding that "elements of neo-Marxist analyses stressing the political power of private capital and questioning the interpretation preferred by decision-makers of the purposes of state intervention were found to have considerable accuracy". Now this is undoubtedly true of the process, but I doubt whether it is true of the product. Nor would I entirely reject some aspects of the New Pluralist theory, particularly his view of the latent professionalism of administration and all that flows from it. But here I must admit to a healthy professional bias!

These, however, are interim

conclusions; later, Dunleavy admits that "the case studies have revealed that despite a very considerable diversion of research effort into an attempt to discover a conventionally 'political' process on high-rise, no such process could be uncovered", and concludes that high-rise issues, at least in his own case studies, appear to be "more determined than determinate".

The book is undoubtedly useful for the light it casts on local government in operation, and on the problematical relationship between national policy-making and its local implementation. The implications for professionals are sobering: they have failed to impress upon government their professional opinion, they have danced to whatever political tune was being played. The implication for the building industry is one of technical inadequacy. More studies of British cities and their housing policies would undoubtedly fill out this picture, but I doubt whether any broad conclusions would differ greatly from the findings of this particular study.

## Driving on the left

Ben Pimlott

ALAN WARDE

Consensus and Beyond: The development of Labour Party strategy since the Second World War  
243pp. Manchester University Press. £19.50.  
0 190 0849 2

A political scientist from outer space once turned up at Labour's Walworth Road headquarters and asked to be directed to the Labour Party. Strolling at such a display of naivety, the Head of Publicity arranged a political tour. The extra-terrestrial visitor was thereupon taken to the Party Conference, which happened to be in session, and then to a particularly acrimonious meeting of the PLP. There followed a key-hole glimpse of the workings of the NEC, participant observer studies of the local General Committee and ward branches, and an excursion to a union regional executive. Meetings of the Fabian Society and Paolo Zlon were thrown in at the end for good measure. "Thank you very much," said the puzzled scholar when this exhausting round was over, "but I asked to be shown the Labour Party. Where is it to be found?"

Such a problem of identification is not restricted to intergalactic investigators. Labour's own activists, not to mention political journalists and ordinary British citizens, are often similarly troubled. Unlike other British parties, which consist, more or less, of the sum of their members variously organized, the Labour Party is an indefinable abstraction - a name-tag for an odd confederation of interests and glibness among whom the party is to be found.

It is Warde's thesis that throughout Labour's post-war history, it has been the unions that have determined which direction the party should take. First came the Gaitskellite "Social Reformists", supporters of free collective bargaining, planning and mixed economy. Then there was

the issue of sovereignty is a matter of perpetual dispute. Ernest Bevin's famous comment that the Labour Party "grew out of the bowels of the TUC" was more than a historical statement of fact - it reflected an attitude towards the political wing of the movement which trade unionists have always held. On the other hand, there have been those who have seen the trade union element as at best a back-up for their own conception of the party's role - whether as an instrument of mild social reform, or as the catalyst of social revolution. It has not just been a matter of two types of membership, individuals and affiliated, but of which dog ought to wag what tail.

In this interesting though infuriatingly jargon-ridden book, Alan Warde rightly stresses that the crucial factor in Labour's internal history has not been the bogus dilemma of Left-versus-Right, but the shifting attitudes and alliances of the trade unions. "Union decisions to support different factions in the Party are less reflections about ideological niceties," he maintains, "and more calculations about their members' interests." Quite so. If Labour looks more "left-wing" to-day than it did in 1979, this has to do with trade union irritation over the last Labour government's wage restraint and the winter of discontent, rather than with any supposed change of heart among the rank and file, or an alleged Trotskyist plot to take over the constituencies.

It is Warde's thesis that throughout Labour's post-war history, it has been the unions that have determined which direction the party should take. First came the Gaitskellite "Social Reformists", supporters of free collective bargaining, planning and mixed economy. Then there was

## Breeding losses

Phyllis Willmott

DIANE GITTINGS

Family Size and Structure  
1900-1990  
240pp. Hutchinson. £12.  
0 09 145490 5

In the fifty years between 1801 and 1851 the population of England and Wales nearly doubled. By the end of the century it had almost doubled again, although the birth-rate by then was noticeably declining. It is assumed that the decline was because the middle classes had begun to take note of what their betters - the upper classes - had been doing for some time. Earlier, between 1801 and 1851, it is an ambitious and to some way original approach which is unfortunately overhauled. The book is a pity.

of "diffusion" downwards of the desire for small families. The author believes this is too simplistic and aims to seek some "alternative explanations". She has an implicitly feminist perspective and a key plank in her argument is that women's pattern of work before and after marriage could be a crucial influence that has been ignored, and one likely to affect power relationships both within and outside the family.

In search of evidence Diane Gittings uses three principal sources: census data from 1801 and 1911; an analysis of 300 individual case records that had survived in a Manchester and Salford birth-control clinic for the years 1928-33; and "in-depth" interviews with elderly women (ten each in Essex, Lancashire and South Wales, born between 1801 and 1915). It is an ambitious and to some way original approach which is unfortunately overhauled. The book is a pity.

material is presented; it is a book to glean from but it is wearisome to read straight through.

Gittings concludes that the motivation to limit family size is as important as the means of doing so, and she rightly points out that such motivation certainly existed among some sections of the working classes long before 1910. A shade reluctantly, she accepts that, indirectly, class influence (not "diffusion") was real, but maintains that it was not simply a matter of the working class seeking to imitate the middle-class ways. A more complex combination of factors associated with general economic changes, increased state intervention in health and education and so on as well as trade union demands, all played some part. She also concludes that improved access to contraception, and the original nineteenth century may have

0 09 145490 5